V. I. LENIN

SELECTED WORKS

IN TWO VOLUMES



LENIN

SELECTED WORKS

VOLUME I

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow 1947

CONTENTS

V. I. LENIN: *SELECTED WORKS*

ON MARX AND MARXISM

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CREATION OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY IN RUSSIA

THE FORMATION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

APPEARANCE OF THE BOLSHEVIK AND MENSHEVIK GROUPS WITHIN THE PARTY

THE PERIOD OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

THE PERIOD OF THE STOLYPIN REACTION THE BOLSHEVIKS CONSTITUTE THEMSELVES AN INDEPENDENT MARXIST PARTY

THE NEW RISE OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT BEFORE THE FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR

THE PERIOD OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR
THE SECOND REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

PREFACE

In the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin the Soviet people have a powerful weapon in their struggle for the honour, freedom and independence of their Socialist country and in their struggle to build a Communist society.

The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course, served as a mighty impetus in the ideological and political life of the Party and the Soviet people. It placed the study of the foundation of Marxism-Leninism and the mastery of Bolshevism on a new and higher footing. It is stimulating the broad masses, in particular the Soviet intellectuals, to independent and deeper study of the great works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The interest in the writings of the founders of Marxism-Leninism has grown tremendously since the appearance of this history.

The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people which culminated in victory over Germany and Japan was a new and splendid confirmation of the invincible might of the Soviet system and the profound historical justness of its advanced and progressive ideology. Lenin's writings arm our people with a knowledge of the laws of social development and teach them to understand the complex phenomena in the life of society. The revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism "gives practical workers the power of orientation, clarity of perspective, confidence in their work, faith in the victory of our cause" (*Stalin*).

The two-volume edition of Lenin's selected works includes the following important writings: "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats," "The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats," "What Is To Be Done?" "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back," "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," "The United States of Europe Slogan," "The War Program of the Proletarian Revolution," "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution" (the April Theses), "The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It," "The State and Revolution," "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," " 'Left-wing' Communism, An Infantile

Disorder," "The Tax in Kind," "On Co-operation,"* and others. Each of these works constitutes a landmark in the history of the Party of Lenin and Stalin and in the development of the Marxist-Leninist theory. In addition, the present two-volume edition includes Lenin's most important articles on the defence of the Socialist fatherland, of tremendous importance in the mobilization and organization of the Soviet people.

In his book "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats" (1894), Lenin thoroughly exposed the true character of the Narodniks, *showing that they were false "friends of the people" and actually working against the people. He showed that it was the Marxists* and not the Narodniks who were the real friends of the people, and who sincerely wanted to destroy tsarism and rid the people of oppression of all kind. For the first time Lenin advanced the idea of a revolutionary alliance of the workers and the peasants as the principal means of overthrowing *tsardom, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, and outlined the main tasks of* the Russian Marxists. In this work he pointed out that it would be the working class of Russia in alliance with the peasantry that would overthrow tsarism, after which the Russian proletariat in alliance with the labouring masses would achieve a free life in which there would be no room for the exploitation of man by man.

In "What Is To Be Done?" (1902) Lenin outlined a concrete organizational plan for the structure of a Marxist Party of the working class. He completely demolished the theory of "Economism," exposed the ideology of opportunism, and the practice of lagging behind events and allowing them to take their own course. He stressed the *importance of theory*, of political consciousness, and of the Party as the guiding force of the working-class movement. He substantiated the thesis that a Marxist Party is a union of the working-class movement with Socialism and gave a brilliant exposition of the ideological foundations of a Marxist Party.

In his famous book "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" (1904), Lenin successfully upheld the Party principle against the circle principle, and the Party against the Menshevik disorganizers, smashed the opportunism of the Mensheviks on questions of organization and laid the organizational foundations of the Bolshevik Party—*the militant revolutionary* Party of the new type. In this book Lenin, "for the first time in the history of Marxism, elaborated the *doctrine of the Party* as the leading *organization* of the proletariat, as the principal *weapon* of the proletariat, without which the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be won." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks]*, page 51.) "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" makes clear the importance of organization and discipline.

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* Lenin's books *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* and *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* have been published as separate works.

In his historic book, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" (1905) Lenin gave a withering criticism of the petty-bourgeois tactical line of the Mensheviks and brilliantly substantiated the Bolshevik tactics in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and in the period of transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the Socialist revolution. The fundamental tactical principle of this book is the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the idea that the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, the proletariat being *in alliance* with the peasantry, would grow into the hegemony of the proletariat in the Socialist revolution, the proletariat being *in alliance* with the other labouring and exploited masses.

"This was a new line in the question of the relation between the bourgeois revolution and the Socialist revolution, a new theory of the regrouping of forces around the proletariat, towards the end of the bourgeois revolution, for a direct transition to the Socialist revolution—the theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution *passing into* the Socialist revolution." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* [*Bolsheviks*], p. 75.)

This book already contains the fundamental elements of Lenin's theory that it is possible for Socialism to be victorious in one country, taken singly. Its invaluable significance is that it enriched Marxism with a new theory of revolution and laid the foundation for the revolutionary tactics of the Bolshevik Party with the help of which the proletariat of our country achieved its victory over capitalism in 1917.

In his work "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" (1916) Lenin makes a Marxist analysis of imperialism, showing that it is the highest and last stage of capitalism, that it is decaying and moribund capitalism, and at the same time the eve of the Socialist revolution. On the basis of data on imperialist capitalism, Lenin set forth a new theory according to which the simultaneous victory of Socialism *in all countries* is impossible, whereas the victory of Socialism in one capitalist country, taken singly, is possible. Lenin formulates this brilliant deduction in his article "The United States of Europe Slogan" (1915) and in his "The War Program of the Proletarian Revolution" (1916).

"This was a *new* and complete theory of the Socialist revolution, a theory affirming the possibility of the victory of Socialism in separate countries, and indicating the conditions of this victory and its prospects. . . ." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* [*Bolsheviks*], p. 169.)

Lenin's April Theses laid down for the Bolshevik Party a brilliant plan of struggle for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the Socialist revolution.

In his work "The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It" (1917) Lenin warned the working people of Russia of the danger of German imperialism enslaving our country if the people did not take power into their own hands and save the country from ruin. Lenin showed that "it is impossible in Russia to advance without advancing towards Socialism," that

an implacable war had placed before our country with ruthless acuteness the question of "either perish, or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*." The salvation of our country from destruction, the strengthening of its defence capacity and the building of Socialism are all closely and indissolubly interconnected, wrote Lenin. Socialism would transform Russia economically and create a material base for the mass heroism of the people, without which it would be impossible to make our country capable of defending itself.

In his book "The State and Revolution" (1917) Lenin laid bare the bourgeois essence of the views of the opportunists (Kautsky and others) and the anarchists on the question of the state and the revolution. In this work Lenin expounds and develops the Marxist theory on the state, the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, on Socialism and Communism. Basing himself on a study of the experience of the two revolutions in Russia, Lenin set forth the theory of a Republic of Soviets as the political form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In his work "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (1918) Lenin dealt with the main problems of Socialist construction, accounting and control in public economy, the establishment of new, Socialist relations of production, the tightening of labour discipline, the development of Socialist competition, the reinforcement and development of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and the development of proletarian democracy.

In his works written during the period of foreign military intervention and the Civil War, Lenin gave classical formulations of the tasks of the people, of the front and rear, in conditions of war.

Lenin demanded of the Soviet men and women in time of war heroism, courage, valour, fearlessness in battle and readiness to fight together with the people against the enemies of our country. It is the task of the rear, he wrote, to convert the country into a united military camp and to work in revolutionary fashion, smoothly and efficiently, under the slogan of "All for the Front." "Since the war has proved unavoidable, everything for the war, and the slightest laxity or lack of energy must be punished in conformity with wartime laws." Lenin demanded of the front relentlessness towards the enemy and the consolidation of all victories that had been won for the complete smashing of the enemy. "The men, commanders and political instructors of the Red Army," says Comrade Stalin, "must firmly bear in mind the behests of our teacher Lenin: 'The first thing is not to be carried away by victory, not to grow conceited; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third thing is to crush the opponent.'"

In his works Lenin has given us a profound analysis of the factors making for the invincibility of the Soviet people and the vitality and indestructibility of the Soviet state. "No one will ever conquer a people

whose workers and peasants have in their majority realized, felt and seen that they are defending their own Soviet government, the government of the toilers, that they are defending a cause whose victory will ensure them and their children the opportunity to take advantage of all the blessings of culture, all the creations of man's labour."

In his article "On Co-operation" and in subsequent articles Lenin reviewed the work of the Party and the Soviet government and outlined a plan for the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. by means of industrializing the country and drawing the peasants into Socialist construction through co-operatives.

The works of Lenin in this two-volume edition of his selected works show the main stages in the historic development of Bolshevism, show Marxism-Leninism in action.

Seven articles by Stalin serve as an introduction to Lenin's writings. In them Stalin gives an unusually powerful and vivid picture of Lenin as one of the greatest geniuses of mankind, the leader of the Bolshevik Party and the working class, a fearless revolutionary, organizer of the Great October Socialist Revolution, builder of the first Socialist state in the world and of the new, Socialist society. Lenin is "a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement." (*Stalin.*)

Stalin describes Lenin as the great patriot of our country, a brilliant strategist and organizer of the defence of the Socialist fatherland against foreign invaders.

All the works included in these two volumes are given in full with the exception of "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats," of which only the first part is given.

In the main the material in these volumes is arranged in chronological order, the exception being the first group of articles, which deal with Marx and Marxism. The contents have been divided into historical periods, as given in *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*. The first volume contains Lenin's writings in the period 1894 to March 1917, while the second volume—as from April 1917 to March 1923.

The second and third editions of Lenin's *Collected Works* have been used throughout as the sources of the material printed here except for "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats" and the "The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats," taken from the fourth edition, the articles written in 1917, taken from the three-volume edition of *Lenin, Collected Works of 1917*, the "Letter to the Tula Comrades," form the *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XXXIV; the appeal "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!" from the book: *V. I. Lenin, From the Civil War Period*, the telegram "To All Provincial and Uyezd Soviet Deputies," from the text published in *Pravda*, No. 54, February 23, 1942,

the appeal "Beware of Spies!" from the text published in *Pravda*, No. 116. May 31, 1919; the letter of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) "All Out for the Fight against Denikin!" from the separate pamphlet published in 1933.

In addition to the date of writing and publication, the articles in this collection are accompanied by brief explanatory notes. Lenin's notes are given without comment. Notes by the editors of this two-volume edition are signed "*Ed.*" The dates in the text and in Lenin's notes conform with the style of calendar used by Lenin.

Lenin's *Two-Volume Edition of Selected Works* is an indispensable reference book for everyone who is studying *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (*Bolsheviks*) and the foundations of Marxism-Leninism.

MARX-ENGELS-LENIN INSTITUTE

STALIN

LENIN
and
LENINISM

Remember, love and study Lenin, our teacher and leader.

Fight and vanquish the enemies, internal and foreign—as Lenin taught us.

Build the new life, the new existence, the new culture—as Lenin taught us.

Never refuse to do the little things, for from little things are built the big things—this is one of Lenin's important behests.

J. STALIN

Помните, любите, изучайте Ильича, нашего учителя, нашего вождя.

Боритесь и побеждайте врагов, внутренних и внешних, — по Ильичу.

Стройте новую жизнь, новый быт, новую культуру — по Ильичу.

Никогда не отказывайтесь от малого в работе, ибо из малого строится великое, — в этом один из важных заветов Ильича.

И. Сталин

A Letter by Comrade Stalin published in "Rabochaya Gazeta" on the occasion of the first anniversary of Lenin's death.

ON THE DEATH OF LENIN

A Speech Delivered at the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets January 26, 1924

Comrades, we Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff. We are those who form the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party whose founder and leader was Comrade Lenin. It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to withstand the stresses and storms that accompany membership in such a party. It is the sons of the working class, the sons of want and struggle, the sons of incredible privation and heroic effort who before all should be members of such a party. That is why the Party of the Leninists, the Party of the Communists, is also called the Party of the working class.

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to hold high and guard the purity of the great title of member of the Party. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will fulfil your behest with credit!

For twenty-five years Comrade Lenin moulded our Party and finally trained it to be the strongest and most highly steeled workers' party in the world. The blows of tsardom and its henchmen, the fury of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the armed attacks of Kolchak and Denikin, the armed intervention of England and France, the lies and slanders of the hundred-mouthed bourgeois press—all these scorpions constantly chastised our Party for a quarter of a century. But our Party stood firm as a rock, repelling the countless blows of the enemy and leading the working class forward, to victory. In fierce battle our Party forged the unity and solidarity of its ranks. And by unity and solidarity it achieved victory over the enemies of the working class.

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard the unity of our Party as the apple of our eye. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest, too, we will fulfil with credit!

Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slaveholders, serfs and sires, peasants and landlords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors—so the world has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores, nay, hundreds of times in the course of the centuries have the labouring people striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the crushed and oppressed labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies before all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is short-lived, that the kingdom of labour *can* be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on *earth.* He thus fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. This explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses.

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will spare no effort to fulfil this behest, too, with credit!

The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in our country on the basis of an alliance between the workers and peasants. This is the prime and fundamental basis of the Republic of Soviets. The workers and peasants could not have vanquished the capitalists and landlords without such an alliance. The workers could not have defeated the capitalists without the support of the peasants. The peasants could not have defeated the landlords without the leadership of the workers. This is borne out by the whole history of the civil war in our country. But the struggle to consolidate the Soviet Republic is by no means at an end—it has only taken on a new form. Before, the alliance of the workers and peasants took the form of a military alliance, because it was directed against Kolchak and Denikin. Now, the alliance of the workers and peasants must assume the form of economic co-operation between town and country, between workers

and peasants, because it is directed against the merchant and the kulak, and its aim is the mutual supply by peasants and workers of all they require. You know that nobody worked for this more persistently than Comrade Lenin.

> *Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to strengthen with all our might the alliance of the workers and the peasants. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest, too, we will fulfil with credit!*

A second basis of the Republic of Soviets is the alliance of the labouring nationalities of our country. Russians and Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Byelorussians, Georgians and Azerbaijanians, Armenians and Daghestanians, Tatars and Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Turkmens are all equally interested in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not only does the dictatorship of the proletariat deliver these nations from chains and oppression, but these nations for their part deliver our Soviet Republic from the intrigues and assaults of the enemies of the working class by their supreme devotion to the Soviet Republic and their readiness to make sacrifices for it. That is why Comrade Lenin untiringly urged upon us the necessity of maintaining the voluntary union of the nations of our country, the necessity for fraternal co-operation between them within the framework of the Union of Republics.

> *Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to consolidate and extend the Union of Republics. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest, too, we will fulfil with credit!*

A third basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is our Red Army and Red Navy. More than once did Lenin impress upon us that the respite we had won from the capitalist states might prove a short one. More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. The events connected with Curzon's ultimatum and the crisis in Germany once more confirmed that, as always, Lenin was right. Let us vow then, comrades, that we will spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.

Like a vast rock, our country towers amid an ocean of bourgeois states. Wave after wave dashes against it, threatening to submerge it and crumble it to pieces. But the rock stands solid and firm. Where lies its strength? Not only in the fact that our country rests on an alliance of workers and peasants, that it embodies an alliance of free nationalities, that it is protected by the strong arm of the Red Army and the Red Navy. The strength, the firmness, the solidity of our country is due to the profound sympathy and unfailing support it finds in the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world. The workers and peasants of the whole world want

the Soviet Republic to be preserved, as a bolt shot by the sure hand of Comrade Lenin into the camp of the enemy, as the pillar of their hopes of deliverance from oppression and exploitation, as a reliable beacon pointing the path to their emancipation. They want to preserve it, and they will not allow the landlords and capitalists to destroy it. Therein lies our strength. Therein lies the strength of the working people of all countries. And therein lies the weakness of the bourgeoisie all over the world.

Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. To him it was always a link needed to strengthen the chain of the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West and the East, a link needed to facilitate the victory of the working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Soviet Republic itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the working people of the world to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the very morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, this most brilliant of all leaders of the proletariat laid the foundation of the workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of the working people of the whole world—the Communist International.

You have seen during the past few days the pilgrimage of scores and hundreds of thousands of working folk to the bier of Comrade Lenin. Soon you will see the pilgrimage of representatives of millions of working people to the tomb of Comrade Lenin. You need not doubt that the representatives of millions will be followed by representatives of scores and hundreds of millions from all parts of the earth, come to testify that Lenin was the leader not only of the Russian proletariat, not only of the European workers, not only of the colonial East, but of all the working people of the globe.

Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to remain faithful to the principles of the Communist International. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our lives to strengthen and extend the union of the toilers of the whole world—the Communist International!

January 30, 1924
Pravda No. 23.

LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER AND LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

Written on the Occasion of Lenin's Fiftieth Birthday

There are two groups of Marxists. Both work under the flag of Marxism and consider themselves "genuine" Marxists. Nevertheless, they are by no means identical. More, a veritable gulf divides them, for their methods of work are diametrically opposed to each other.

The first group usually confines itself to an outward acceptance, to a ceremonial avowal of Marxism. Being unable or unwilling to grasp the essence of Marxism, being unable or unwilling to translate it into reality, it converts the living and revolutionary principles of Marxism into lifeless and meaningless formulas. It does not base its activities on experience, on what practical work teaches, but on quotations from Marx. It does not derive its instructions and directions from an analysis of actual realities, but from analogies and historical parallels. Discrepancy between word and deed is the chief malady of this group. Hence that disillusionment and perpetual grudge against fate which time and again betrays it and leaves it "with its nose out of joint." This group is known as the Mensheviks (in Russia), or opportunists (in Europe). Comrade Tyszka (Yogisches) described this group very aptly at the London Congress when he said that it does not stand by, but *lies down on* the Marxist view.

The second group, on the other hand, attaches prime importance not to the outward acceptance of Marxism, but to its realization, its translation into reality. What this group chiefly concentrates its attention on is to determine the ways and means of realizing Marxism that best answer the situation, and to change these ways and means as the situation changes. It does not derive its directions and instructions from historical analogies and parallels, but from a study of surrounding conditions. It does not base its activities on quotations and maxims, but on practical experience, testing every step by experience, learning from its mistakes and teaching others how to build a new life. This, in fact, explains why there is no discrepancy between word and deed in the activities of this group, and why the teachings of Marx completely retain their living, revolutionary

force. To this group may be fully applied Marx's saying that Marxists cannot rest content with interpreting the world, but must go farther and change it. This group is known as the Bolsheviks, the Communists.

The organizer and leader of this group is V. I. Lenin.

I

LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The *formation* of the proletarian party in Russia took place under special conditions, conditions differing from those prevailing in the West at the time the workers' parties were formed there. Whereas in the West, in France and in Germany, the workers' party emerged from the trade unions at a time when trade unions and parties were legal, when the bourgeois revolution had already been made, when bourgeois parliaments existed, when the bourgeoisie, having climbed into power, found itself face to face with the proletariat, in Russia, on the contrary, the formation of the proletarian party took place under a most ferocious absolutism, in expectation of a bourgeois-democratic revolution; at a time when, on the one hand, the Party organizations were filled to overflowing with bourgeois "legal Marxists" who were thirsting to utilize the working class for the bourgeois revolution, and when, on the other, the tsarist gendarmerie were robbing the Party's ranks of its best workers, while the growth of a spontaneous revolutionary movement called for the existence of a steadfast, compact and sufficiently secret fighting core of revolutionaries, capable of leading the movement for the overthrow of absolutism.

The task was to separate the sheep from the goats, to dissociate oneself from alien elements, to organize cadres of experienced revolutionaries in the localities, to provide them with a clear program and firm tactics, and, lastly, to form these cadres into a single, militant organization of professional revolutionaries, sufficiently secret to withstand the onslaughts of the gendarmes, and at the same time sufficiently connected with the masses to lead them into battle at the required moment.

The Mensheviks, the people who "lie down" on the Marxist view, settled the question very simply: inasmuch as the workers' party in the West had emerged from non-party trade unions fighting for the improvement of the economic conditions of the working class, the same, as far as possible, should be the case in Russia; that is, the "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government" in the various localities was enough for the time being, no all-Russian militant organization should be created, and later... well, later, if trade unions did not arise by that time, a non-party labour congress should be called and proclaimed the party.

That this "Marxist" "plan" of the Mensheviks, utopian though it was under Russian conditions, would entail extensive agitational work designed

parage the very idea of party, to destroy the Party cadres, to leave ·oletariat without a party and to surrender the working class to the · mercies of the liberals, the Mensheviks, and perhaps a good many ›viks too, hardly suspected at the time.

vas an immense service that Lenin rendered the Russian proletariat s Party by exposing the utter danger of the Mensheviks' "plan" of zation at a time when this "plan" was still in the germ, when even :hors perceived its outlines with difficulty, and, having exposed it, ›ning a furious attack on the license of the Mensheviks in matters of zation and concentrating the whole attention of the militants on this ın. For the very existence of the Party was at stake; it was a matter or death for the Party.

plan that Lenin developed in his famous books, *What Is To Be Done.* and *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back,* was to establish an all-Russian political newspaper as a rallying centre of Party forces, to organize staunch Party cadres in the localities as "regular units" of the Party, to gather these cadres into one entity through the medium of the newspaper, and to unite them into an all-Russian militant party with sharply-defined limits, with a clear program, firm tactics and a single will. The merit of this plan lay in the fact that it fully conformed to Russian realities, and that it generalized in a masterly fashion the organizational experience of the best of the militants. In the struggle for this plan, the majority of the Russian militants resolutely sided with Lenin and did not shrink from the prospect of a split. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for that closely-welded and steeled Communist Party of which there is no equal in the world.

Our comrades (and not only the Mensheviks!) often accused Lenin of an extreme fondness for controversy and splits, of being relentless in his struggle against conciliators and so on. At times this was undoubtedly the case. But it will be easily understood that our Party could not have rid itself of internal weakness and diffuseness, that it could not have attained its characteristic vigour and strength if it had not expelled non-proletarian, opportunist elements from its midst. In the epoch of bourgeois rule, a proletarian party can grow and gain strength only to the extent that it combats the opportunist, anti-revolutionary and anti-Party elements in its own midst and within the working class. Lassalle was right when he said: "A party becomes stronger by purging itself." The accusers usually cited the German party, where "unity" at that time flourished. But, in the first place, not every kind of unity is a sign of strength, and secondly, one has only to glance at the late German party, now rent into three parties, to realize the utter falsity and fictitiousness of "unity" between Scheidemann and Noske, on the one hand, and Liebknecht and Luxemburg, on the other. And who knows whether it would not have been better for the German proletariat if the revolutionary elements of the German party had split away from its anti-revolutionary elements in time.... No, Lenin was a

thousand times right in leading the Party along the path of irreconcilable struggle against the anti-Party and anti-revolutionary elements. For it was only because of such a policy of organization that our Party was able to create that internal unity and astonishing cohesion which enabled it to emerge unscathed from the July crisis during the Kerensky regime, to bear the brunt of the October uprising, to pass through the crisis of the Brest-Litovsk period unshaken, to organize the victory over the Entente, and, lastly, to acquire that unparalleled flexibility which permits it at any moment to reform its ranks and to concentrate hundreds of thousands of its members on any big task without causing confusion in its midst.

2

LENIN AS THE LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

But the merits of the Russian Communist Party in the field of organization are only one aspect of the matter. The Party could not have grown and fortified itself so quickly if the political content of its work, its program and tactics had not conformed to Russian realities, if its slogans had not fired the worker masses and had not impelled the revolutionary movement forward. We shall now deal with this aspect.

The Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905) took place under conditions differing from those that prevailed during the revolutionary upheavals in the West, in France and Germany, for example. Whereas the revolution in the West took place in the period of manufacture and of an undeveloped class struggle, when the proletariat was weak and numerically small and did not have its own party to formulate its demands, and when the bourgeoisie was sufficiently revolutionary to win the confidence of the workers and peasants and to lead them in the struggle against the aristocracy, in Russia, on the other hand, the revolution began (1905) in the period of machine industry and of a developed class struggle, when the Russian proletariat, relatively numerous and welded together by capitalism, had already fought a number of battles with the bourgeoisie, had its own party, which was more united than the bourgeois party, and its own class demands, and when the Russian bourgeoisie, which, moreover, subsisted on government contracts, was sufficiently scared by the revolutionary temper of the proletariat to seek an alliance with the government and the landlords against the workers and peasants. The fact that the Russian revolution broke out as a result of the military defeats suffered on the fields of Manchuria only accelerated events without essentially altering them.

The situation demanded that the proletariat should take the lead of the revolution, rally the revolutionary peasants and wage a determined fight against tsardom and the bourgeoisie simultaneously, with a view to establishing complete democracy in the country and ensuring its own class interests.

But the Mensheviks, the people who "lie down" on the Marxist view, settled the question in their own fashion: inasmuch as the Russian revolution was a bourgeois revolution, and inasmuch as it was the representatives of the bourgeoisie that lead bourgeois revolutions (see the "history" of the French and German revolutions), the proletariat could not exercise the hegemony in the Russian revolution, the leadership should be left to the Russian bourgeoisie (which was betraying the revolution); the peasantry should also be left under the tutelage of the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat should remain an extreme Left opposition.

And this vulgar rehash of the tunes of the wretched liberals the Mensheviks passed off as the last word in "genuine" Marxism!

It was an immense service that Lenin rendered the Russian revolution by utterly exposing the futility of the Mensheviks' historical parallels and the danger of the Menshevik "scheme of revolution" which would surrender the cause of the workers to the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie. The tactical plan which Lenin developed in his famous pamphlets, *Two Tactics* and *The Victory of the Cadets*, was as follows: a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, instead of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; boycott of the Bulygin Duma* and armed uprising, instead of participating in the Duma and carrying on organic work within it; the idea of a "Left bloc," when the Duma was after all convened, and the utilization of the Duma tribune for the struggle waged outside the Duma, instead of a Cadet Ministry and the reactionary "cherishing" of the Duma; a fight against the Cadet Party** as a counter-revolutionary force, instead of forming a "bloc" with it.

The merit of this plan was that it bluntly and decisively formulated the class demands of the proletariat in the epoch of the *bourgeois-democratic revolution* in Russia, facilitated the transition to the Socialist revolution, and bore within itself the germ of the idea of the *dictatorship of the proletariat.* The majority of the Russian militants resolutely and unswervingly followed Lenin in the struggle for this tactical plan. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for those revolutionary tactics with whose help our Party is now shaking the foundations of world imperialism.

The subsequent development of events: the four years of imperialist war and the shattering of the whole economic life of the country; the February Revolution and the celebrated dual power; the Provisional Government, which was a hotbed of bourgeois counter-revolution, and the Petrograd

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* *The Bulygin Duma*—so called after Bulygin, Minister for Internal Affairs and chairman of a commission, which, in 1905, drafted a law to convoke a State Duma with advisory powers. But this Duma was never actually convened. The rise of the revolutionary wave in the autumn of 1905 forced the tsarist government to abandon this draft and to come out with the promise of convening a State Duma clothed with legislative powers.—*Ed.*

** *The Constitutional-Democratic Party*—the main party of the Russian liberal-monarchistic bourgeoisie, founded in 1905.—*Ed.*

Soviet, which was the form of the incipient proletarian dictatorship; the October Revolution and the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly; the abolition of bourgeois parliamentarism and the proclamation of the Republic of Soviets; the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war and the offensive of world imperialism, in conjunction with the pseudo-Marxists, against the proletarian revolution; and, lastly, the pitiable position of the Mensheviks, who clung to the Constituent Assembly and who were thrown overboard by the proletariat and driven by the waves of revolution *to the shores of capitalism—all this only confirmed the correctness of the* principles of the revolutionary tactics formulated by Lenin in his *Two Tactics*. A Party with such a heritage could sail boldly forward, fearless of submerged rocks.

* * *

In these days of proletarian revolution, when every Party slogan and every utterance of a leader is tested in action, the proletariat makes special demands of its leaders. History knows of proletarian leaders who were leaders in times of storm, practical leaders, self-sacrificing and courageous, but who were weak in theory. The names of such leaders are not soon forgotten by the masses. Such, for example, were Lassalle in Germany and Blanqui in France. But the movement as a whole cannot live on reminiscences alone: *it must have a clear goal (a program), and a firm line (tactics).*

There is another type of leader—peace-time leaders, who are strong in theory, but weak in questions of organization and practical affairs. Such leaders *are popular only among an upper layer of the proletariat, and then* only up to a certain point; when times of revolution set in, when practical revolutionary slogans are demanded of the leaders, the theoreticians quit *the stage and give way to new men. Such, for example, were Plekhanov in* Russia and Kautsky in Germany.

To retain the post of leader of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian party, *one must combine strength of theory with experience in the* practical organization of the proletarian movement. P. Axelrod, when he was a Marxist, wrote of Lenin that he "happily combines the experience of a good practical worker, a theoretical education and a broad political outlook" (see P. Axelrod's preface to Lenin's pamphlet: *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*). What Mr. Axelrod, the ideologist of "civilized" capitalism, would say now about Lenin, is not difficult to guess. But we who know Lenin well and can judge dispassionately have no doubt that Lenin has fully retained this old quality. It is here, incidentally, that one must seek the reason why it is Lenin, and no one else, who is today the leader of the strongest and most highly tempered proletarian party in the world.

Pravda No. 86,
April 23, 1920

LENIN

Speech Delivered at a Memorial Meeting of the Kremlin Military School

January 28, 1924

Comrades, I am told that you have arranged a Lenin memorial meeting this evening, and that I have been invited as one of the speakers. I believe there is no need for me to deliver a set speech on Lenin's activities. It would be better, I think, to confine myself to a few facts to bring out certain of Lenin's characteristics as a man and a statesman. There may perhaps be no inherent connection between these facts, but that is of no vital importance as far as gaining a general idea of Lenin is concerned. At any rate, I am unable on this occasion to do more than what I have just promised.

A MOUNTAIN EAGLE

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance; it was maintained by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the 'nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*,* had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. I did not regard him as a mere leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues — Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the

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* *Iskra* (The Spark), founded by Lenin at the end of 1900, was the first all-Russian newspaper of the revolutionary Marxists. It was published abroad, smuggled into Russia, and circulated illegally. Lenin's *Iskra*, 1900-1903, has played an immense historical role in preparing the ground for the foundation of an independent political party of the Russian working class. In November 1903, soon after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., the paper passed over into the hands of the Mensheviks.—*Ed.*

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others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia—this was at the end of 1903—I received *an enthusiastic letter from my friend and a* simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it appeared, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly that every sentence did not so much speak as ring like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter strengthened my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

MODESTY

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. . . .

It is accepted as the usual thing for a "great man" to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance *with bated breath; and* then, just before the great man enters, the warning whisper goes up: "Hush! . . . Silence! . . . He's coming." This rite did *not seem to me* superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner, and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most *ordinary* conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed *to me* to be rather a violation of certain essential rules.

Only later did I *realize* that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not

to emphasize his high position—that this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses, of the very "rank and file" of humanity.

FORCE OF LOGIC

The two speeches Lenin delivered at this conference were remarkable: one was on the political situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They were inspired, and they roused the whole conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understandable sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming for effect—all this made Lenin's speech a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual "parliamentary" orator.

But what captivated me at the time was not these features of Lenin's speeches. I was captivated by that irresistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, thoroughly overpowered his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as the saying goes, captivated it completely. I remember that many of the delegates said: "The logic of Lenin's speeches is like a mighty tentacle which seizes you on all sides as in a vise and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or make up your mind to utter defeat."

I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator.

NO WHINING

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not a jot like those leaders who whine and lose heart when beaten. On the contrary defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his followers for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But was it defeat? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress—Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's implacable criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The talk of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness

and dejection. I recall that Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory —that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the early future.

"No whining over defeat"—this was a feature of Lenin's activities that helped him to weld together an army faithful to the end and confident of its strength.

NO CONCEIT

At the next Congress, held in 1907 in London, the Bolsheviks were victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory usually turns the heads of leaders and makes them haughty and conceited. They begin in most cases by celebrating their victory and resting on their laurels. Lenin did not resemble such leaders one jot. On the contrary, it was after a victory that he was most vigilant and cautious. I recall that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to be carried away by victory, not to grow conceited; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third thing is to crush the opponent, for he has been defeated, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "*It is all over with the Mensheviks now.*" He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the labour movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the adversary had to be avoided.

"No conceit in victory"—this was a feature of Lenin's character that helped him soberly to weigh the strength of the enemy and to insure the Party against possible surprises.

FIDELITY TO PRINCIPLE

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never was a captive of the majority, especially when that majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occasions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand on principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to

stand alone against all, considering—as he would often say—that "a policy of principle is the only correct policy."

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

First fact. This was in the period 1909-11, when the Party had been smashed by the counter-revolution and was in a state of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; it was a period when the necessity for a secret organization was being denied, a period of Liquidatorism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks consisted of a number of factions and trends, which for the most part were severed from the working-class movement. We know that it was at this period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the secret party and of organizing the workers into a legally-sanctioned, liberal, Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the general contagion and to hold aloft the Party banner assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combating each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party idea with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

We know that in this fight for the Party idea, Lenin later proved the victor.

Second fact. This was the period 1914-17, when the imperialist war was in full swing, and when all, or nearly all, the Social-Democratic and Socialist parties had succumbed to the general patriotic frenzy and placed themselves at the service of the imperialism of their respective countries. It was a period when the Second International had hauled down its colours to capitalism, when even people like Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde and the rest were unable to withstand the tide of chauvinism. Lenin at that time was the only one, or nearly the only one, to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism and social-pacifism, to denounce the treachery of the Guesdes and Kautskys, and to stigmatize the half-heartedness of the betwixt-and-between "revolutionaries." Lenin knew that he was backed by only an insignificant minority, but to him this was not of decisive moment for he knew that the only correct policy with a future before it was the policy of consistent internationalism, that the only correct policy was one of principle.

We know that in this fight for a new International Lenin proved the victor.

"A policy of principle is the only correct policy"—this was the formula with which Lenin took "impregnable" positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism.

FAITH IN THE MASSES

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by an unsavoury disease. This

disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives rise in the leaders to an aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who although they may not be versed in the history of revolutions are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that the elements may break loose, that the masses may "destroy too much"; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

Lenin was the very antithesis of such leaders. I do not know of any revolutionary who had so profound a faith in the creative power of the proletariat and in the revolutionary fitness of its class instinct as Lenin. I do not know of any revolutionary who could scourge the smug critics of the "chaos of revolution" and the "riot of unauthorized actions of the masses" so ruthlessly as Lenin. I recall that when in the course of a conversation one comrade said that "the revolution should be followed by normal order," Lenin sarcastically remarked: "It is a regrettable thing when people who would be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order in history is revolutionary order."

Hence, Lenin's contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin's constant precept: learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

Faith in the creative power of the masses—this was the feature of Lenin's activities which enabled him to comprehend the elemental forces and to direct their movement into the channel of the proletarian revolution.

THE GENIUS OF REVOLUTION

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and a supreme master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as in times of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin equally approved of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was Lenin's brilliant insight displayed so fully and conspicuously as in times of revolutionary outbreak. During revolutionary upheavals he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, divined the movement of classes and the probable zigzags of revolution as if they lay in the palm of his hand. It used to be said with good reason in our Party circles: "Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water."

Hence, the "amazing" *clarity* of Lenin's tactical slogans and the "astounding" *boldness* of his revolutionary plans.

I recall two facts which are particularly characteristic of this feature of Lenin.

First fact. It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, driven by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were demanding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of "war to a finish"; when so-called "public opinion" and the so-called "Socialist parties" were inimical to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as "German spies"; when Kerensky was trying—already with some success—to drive the Bolshevik Party underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition stood confronting our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European "Socialists" lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of "war to a victorious finish...."

What did starting an uprising at such a moment mean? Starting an uprising in such a situation meant staking everything. But Lenin did not fear the risk, for he knew, he saw with his prophetic eye, that an uprising was inevitable, that it would win; that an uprising in Russia would pave the way for the termination of the imperialist war, that it would rouse the worn-out masses of the West, that it would transform the imperialist war into a civil war; that the uprising would usher in a Republic of Soviets, and that the Republic of Soviets would serve as a bulwark for the revolutionary movement all over the world.

We know that Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with unparalleled fidelity.

Second fact. It was in the very first days of the October Revolution, when the Council of People's Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous Commander-in-Chief, to terminate hostilities and to start negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future Commander-in-Chief) and I went to General Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin and General Headquarters categorically refused to obey the orders of the Council of People's Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of General Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this army of twelve million would say, subordinated as it was to the so-called army organizations, which were hostile to the Soviets. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military Cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin's face suddenly lit up; it became extraordinarily radiant. Clearly, he had arrived at a decision. "Let's go to the wireless station," he said, "it will stand us in good stead. We will issue a special order dismissing General Dukhonin, appoint Krylenko Commander-in-Chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the heads of the officers, calling upon them to surround the generals, to terminate hostilities, to establish contact with the German and Austrian soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap in the dark." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap";

on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would win peace, sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the German and Austrian soldiers and would give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

We know that here, too, Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with the utmost fidelity.

Brilliant insight, the ability rapidly to grasp and divine the inner meaning of impending events, was that quality in Lenin which enabled him to lay down the correct strategy and a clear line of conduct at crucial moments of the revolutionary movement.

Pravda No. 34,
February 12, 1924

INTERVIEW GIVEN TO THE FIRST AMERICAN LABOUR DELEGATION

SEPTEMBER 9, 1927

(Excerpt)

QUESTIONS PUT BY THE DELEGATION AND STALIN'S ANSWERS

QUESTION 1: *What new principles have Lenin and the Communist Party added to Marxism in practice? Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in "constructive revolution" whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?*

ANSWER: I think that Lenin "added" no "new principles" to Marxism nor did he abolish any of the "old" principles of Marxism. Lenin was, and remains, the most loyal and consistent pupil of Marx and Engels, and he wholly and entirely based himself on the principles of Marxism. But Lenin did not merely carry out the doctrines of Marx and Engels. He developed these doctrines still further. What does that mean? It means that he developed the doctrines of Marx and Engels in accordance with the new conditions of development, with the new phase of capitalism, with imperialism. This means that in developing the doctrines of Marx in the new conditions of the class struggle, Lenin contributed something new to the general treasury of Marxism as compared with what was contributed by Marx and Engels and with what could be contributed in the pre-imperialist period of capitalism. The new contribution Lenin made to the treasury of Marxism is wholly and entirely based on the principles laid down by Marx and Engels. It is in this sense that we speak of Leninism as Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. Here are a few questions to which Lenin contributed something new in development of the doctrines of Marx.

First: the question of monopoly capitalism—of imperialism as the new phase of capitalism. In *Capital* Marx and Engels analysed the foundations of capitalism. But Marx and Engels lived in the period of the domination of pre-monopoly capitalism, in the period of the smooth evolution of capital-

ism and its "peaceful" expansion all over the world. This old phase of capitalism came to a close towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, when Marx and Engels were already dead. Clearly, Marx and Engels could only conjecture the new conditions of development of capitalism that arose out of the new phase of capitalism—which succeeded the old phase—out of the imperialist, monopoly phase of development, when the smooth evolution of capitalism gave way to spasmodic, cataclysmic development, when the unevenness of development and the contradictions of capitalism became particularly pronounced, and when the struggle for markets and spheres for capital export, in view of the extreme unevenness of development, made periodical imperialist wars for periodical redivisions of the world and of spheres of influence inevitable. The service Lenin rendered, and, consequently, his new contribution, was that, on the basis of the main principles enunciated in *Capital*, he made a reasoned Marxist analysis of imperialism as the last phase of capitalism, and exposed its ulcers and the conditions of its inevitable doom. On the basis of this analysis arose Lenin's well-known principle that the conditions of imperialism made possible the victory of Socialism in individual capitalist countries, taken separately.

Second: the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The fundamental idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the political rule of the proletariat and as a method of overthrowing the rule of capital by force was advanced by Marx and Engels. Lenin's new contribution in this field was: a) that he discovered the Soviet form of government as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, utilizing for this purpose the experience of the Paris Commune and the Russian revolution; b) that he deciphered the formula of the dictatorship of the proletariat from the angle of the problem of the allies of the proletariat, and defined the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, as the leader, and the exploited masses of the non-proletarian classes (the peasantry, etc.), as the led; c) that he laid particular emphasis on the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the highest type of democracy in class society, the form of *proletarian* democracy, which expresses the interests of the majority (the exploited), as against *capitalist* democracy, which expresses the interests of the minority (the exploiters).

Third: the question of the forms and methods of successfully building Socialism in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism, in a country surrounded by capitalist states. Marx and Engels regarded the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a more or less prolonged one, full of revolutionary conflicts and civil wars, in the course of which the proletariat, being in power, would take the economic, political, cultural and organizational measures necessary for creating, in the place of the old, capitalist society, a new, Socialist society, a society without classes and without a state. Lenin wholly and entirely adhered to these fundamental principles of Marx and

to suppress the proletariat. Twice did the bourgeoisie in Russia try to restore the bourgeois parliament and put an end to the Soviets: in August 1917, at the time of the "Pre-parliament," before the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, and in January 1918, at the time of the "Constituent Assembly," after the seizure of power by the proletariat. And on both occasions it suffered defeat. Why? Because the bourgeoisie was already politically isolated, the millions of working people regarded the proletariat as the sole leader of the revolution, and because the Soviets had already been tried and tested by the masses as their own workers' government, to exchange which for a bourgeois parliament would have meant suicide for the proletariat. It is not surprising, therefore, that bourgeois parliamentarism did *not take root* in Russia. That is why the revolution in Russia led to the *rule of the proletariat*. Such were the results of the application of Lenin's system of the hegemony of the proletariat in revolution.

Fifth: the national and colonial question. Analysing in their time the events in Ireland, India, China, the Central European countries, Poland and Hungary, Marx and Engels developed the basic and initial ideas on the national and colonial question. Lenin in his works based himself on these ideas. Lenin's new contribution in this field was: a) that he gathered these ideas into one harmonious system of views on national and colonial revolutions in the epoch of imperialism; b) that he connected the national and colonial question with the overthrow of imperialism; and c) that he declared the national and colonial question to be a component part of the general question of international proletarian revolution.

Lastly: the question of the Party of the proletariat. Marx and Engels gave the main outlines of the idea of the Party as the vanguard of the proletariat, without which (the Party) the proletariat could not achieve its emancipation, either in the sense of capturing power or in the sense of reconstructing capitalist society. Lenin's contribution in this field was that he developed these outlines further and applied them to the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism, and showed: a) that the Party is a higher form of class organization of the proletariat compared with other forms of proletarian organization (labour unions, co-operative societies, the organization of state) whose work it is the Party's function to generalize and to direct; b) that the dictatorship of the proletariat can be realized only through the Party, the directing force of the dictatorship; c) that the dictatorship of the proletariat can be complete only if it is led by one party, the Communist Party, which does not and must not share the leadership with any other party; and d) that unless there is iron discipline in the Party, the task of the dictatorship of the proletariat of suppressing the exploiters and transforming class society into Socialist society cannot be accomplished.

This, in the main, is the new contribution made by Lenin in his works, giving more specific form to and developing Marx's doctrine as applied

to the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism.

That is why we say that Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

It is clear from this that Leninism cannot be separated from Marxism; still less can it be contrasted to Marxism.

The question submitted by the delegation goes on to ask: "Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in 'constructive revolution' whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?" I think it would be absolutely incorrect to say that. I think that every popular revolution, if it really is a popular revolution, is a constructive revolution, for it breaks up the old system and constructs, creates a new one. Of course, there is nothing constructive in such revolutions—if they may be called that—as take place, say, in Albania, in the form of comic opera "risings" of tribe against tribe. But Marxists never regarded such comic opera "risings" as revolutions. We are obviously not referring to such "risings," but to a mass popular revolution in which the oppressed classes rise up against the oppressing classes. Such a revolution cannot but be constructive. And it was precisely for such a revolution, and only for such a revolution, that Marx and Lenin stood. It goes without saying that such a revolution cannot arise under all conditions, that it can break out only under certain definite, favourable economic and political conditions.

* * *

QUESTION 12: *Can you outline briefly the characteristics of the society of the future which Communism is trying to create?*

ANSWER: The general characteristics of Communist society are given in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Briefly, the anatomy of Communist society may be described as follows: It is a society in which: a) there will be no private ownership of the instruments and means of production but social, collective ownership; b) there will be no classes or state, but workers in industry and agriculture managing their economic affairs as a free association of working people; c) national economy, organized according to plan, will be based on the highest technique in both industry and agriculture; d) there will be no antithesis between town and country, between industry and agriculture; e) products will be distributed according to the principle of the old French Communists: "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs"; f) science and art will enjoy conditions conducive to their highest development; g) the individual, freed from bread and butter cares, and of the necessity of cringing to the "powers that be" will become really free, etc., etc. Clearly, we are still remote from such a society.

With regard to the international conditions necessary for the complete triumph of Communist society, these will develop and grow in proportion as revolutionary crises and revolutionary outbreaks of the working class in capitalist countries grow. It must not be imagined that the working class in one country, or in several countries, will march towards Socialism, and still more to Communism, and that the capitalists of other countries will sit still with folded arms and look on with indifference. Still less must it be imagined that the working class in capitalist countries will agree to be mere spectators of the victorious development of Socialism in one or another country. As a matter of fact, the capitalists will do all in their power to crush such countries. As a matter of fact, every important step taken towards Socialism, and still more towards Communism, in any country will inevitably be accompanied by the unrestrainable efforts of the working class in capitalist countries to achieve the dictatorship and Socialism in those countries. Thus, in the further progress of development of the international revolution, two world centres will be formed: the Socialist centre, attracting to itself all the countries gravitating towards Socialism, and the capitalist centre, attracting to itself all the countries gravitating towards capitalism. The fight between these two centres for the conquest of world economy will decide the fate of capitalism and Communism throughout the whole world, for the final defeat of world capitalism means the victory of Socialism in the arena of world economy.

Pravda No. 210,
September 15, 1927

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF VOTERS OF THE STALIN ELECTORAL AREA, MOSCOW

DECEMBER 11, 1937, IN THE GRAND THEATRE

Comrades, to tell you the truth, I had no intention of making a speech. But our respected Nikita Sergeyevich [Khrushchov] dragged me to this meeting by sheer force, so to speak. "Make a good speech," he said. What shall I talk about, exactly what sort of speech? Everything that had to be said before the elections has already been said and said again in the speeches of our leading comrades, Kalinin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, and many other responsible comrades. What can be added to these speeches?

What is needed, they say, are explanations of certain questions connected with the election campaign. What explanations, on what questions? Everything that had to be explained has been explained and explained again in the well-known Addresses of the Bolshevik Party, the Young Communist League, the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, the Aviation and Chemical Defence League and the Committee of Physical Culture. What can be added to these explanations?

Of course, one could make a light sort of speech about everything and nothing. [*Amusement.*] Perhaps such a speech would amuse the audience. They say that there are some great hands at such speeches not only over there, in the capitalist countries, but here too, in the Soviet country. [*Laughter and applause.*] But, firstly, I am no great hand at such speeches. Secondly, is it worth while indulging in amusing things just now when all of us, Bolsheviks, are, as they say, "up to our necks" in work? I think not.

Clearly, you cannot make a good speech under such circumstances.

However, since I have taken the floor, I will have, of course, to say at least something one way or another. [*Loud applause.*]

First of all, I would like to express my thanks [*applause*] to the electors for the confidence they have shown in me. [*Applause.*]

I have been nominated as candidate, and the Election Commission of the Stalin Area of the Soviet capital has registered my candidature. This, comrades, is an expression of great confidence. Permit me to convey my profound Bolshevik gratitude for this confidence that you have shown in the

Bolshevik Party of which I am a member, and in me personally as a representative of that Party. [*Loud applause.*]

I know what confidence means. It naturally lays upon me new and additional duties and, consequently, new and additional responsibilities. Well, it is not customary among us Bolsheviks to refuse responsibilities. I accept them willingly. [*Loud and prolonged applause.*]

For my part, I would like to assure you, comrades, that you may safely rely on Comrade Stalin. [*Loud and sustained cheers. A voice: "And we all stand for Comrade Stalin!"*] You may take it for granted that Comrade Stalin will be able to discharge his duty to the people [*applause*], to the working class [*applause*], to the peasantry [*applause*] and to the intelligentsia. [*Applause.*]

Further, comrades, I would like to congratulate you on the occasion of the forthcoming national holiday, the day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union. [*Loud applause.*] The forthcoming elections are not merely elections, comrades, they are really a national holiday of our workers, our peasants and our intelligentsia. [*Loud applause.*] Never in the history of the world have there been such really free and really democratic elections—never! History knows no other example like it. [*Applause.*] The point is not that our elections will be universal, equal, secret and direct, although that fact in itself is of great importance. The point is that our universal elections will be carried out as the freest elections and the most democratic of any country in the world.

Universal elections exist and are held in some capitalist countries, too, so-called democratic countries. But in what atmosphere are elections held there? In an atmosphere of class conflicts, in an atmosphere of class enmity, in an atmosphere of pressure brought to bear on the electors by the capitalists, landlords, bankers and other capitalist sharks. Such elections, even if they are universal, equal, secret and direct, cannot be called altogether free and altogether democratic elections.

Here, in our country, on the contrary, elections are held in an entirely different atmosphere. Here there are no capitalists and no landlords and, consequently, no pressure is exerted by propertied classes on non-propertied classes. Here elections are held in an atmosphere of collaboration between the workers, the peasants and the intelligentsia, in an atmosphere of mutual confidence between them, in an atmosphere, I would say, of mutual friendship; because there are no capitalists in our country, no landlords, no exploitation and nobody, in fact, to bring pressure to bear on people in order to distort their will.

That is why our elections are the only really free and really democratic elections in the whole world. [*Loud applause.*]

Such free and really democratic elections could arise only on the basis of the triumph of the Socialist system, only on the basis of the fact that in our country Socialism is not merely being built, but has already become part of life, of the daily life of the people. Some ten years ago the question

might still be debated whether Socialism could be built in our country or not. Today this is no longer a debatable question. Today it is a matter of facts, a matter of real life, a matter of habits that permeate the whole life of the people. Our mills and factories are being run without capitalists. The work is directed by men and women of the people. That is what we call Socialism in practice. In our fields the tillers of the land work without landlords and without kulaks. The work is directed by men and women of the people. That is what we call Socialism in daily life, that is what we call a free, Socialist life.

It is on this basis that our new, really free and really democratic elections have arisen, elections which have no precedent in the history of mankind.

How then, after this, can one refrain from congratulating you on the occasion of the day of national celebration, the day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union! [*Loud, general cheers.*]

Further, comrades, I would like to give you some advice, the advice of a candidate to his electors. If you take capitalist countries you will find that peculiar, I would say, rather strange relations exist there between deputies and voters. As long as the elections are in progress, the deputies flirt with the electors, fawn on them, swear fidelity and make heaps of promises of every kind. It would appear that the deputies are completely dependent on the electors. As soon as the elections are over, and the candidates have become deputies, relations undergo a radical change. Instead of the deputies being dependent on the electors, they become entirely independent. For four or five years, that is, until the next elections, the deputy feels quite free, independent of the people, of his electors. He may pass from one camp to another, he may turn from the right road to the wrong road, he may even become entangled in machinations of a not altogether savoury character, he may turn as many somersaults as he likes—he is independent.

Can such relations be regarded as normal? By no means, comrades. This circumstance was taken into consideration by our Constitution and it made it a law that electors have the right to recall their deputies before the expiration of their term of office if they begin to play tricks, if they turn off the road, or if they forget that they are dependent on the people, on the electors.

This is a wonderful law, comrades. A deputy should know that he is the servant of the people, their emissary in the Supreme Soviet, and that he must follow the line laid down in the mandate given him by the people. If he turns off the road, the electors are entitled to demand new elections, and as to the deputy who turned off the road, they have the right to send him packing. [*Laughter and applause.*] This is a wonderful law. My advice, the advice of a candidate to his electors, is that they remember this electors' right, the right to recall deputies before the expiration of their term of office, that they keep an eye on their deputies, control them and, if they should take it into their heads to turn off the right road, to get rid of them and demand new elections. The government is obliged to appoint new

elections. My advice is to remember this law and to take advantage of it should need arise.

And, lastly, one more piece of advice from a candidate to his electors. What in general must one demand of one's deputies, selecting from all possible demands the most elementary?

The electors, the people, must demand that their deputies should remain equal to their tasks, that in their work they should not sink to the level of political philistines, that in their posts they should remain political figures of the Lenin type, that as public figures they should be as clear and definite as Lenin was [*applause*], that they should be as fearless in battle and as merciless towards the enemies of the people as Lenin was [*applause*], that they should be free from all panic, from any semblance of panic, when things begin to get complicated and some danger or other looms on the horizon, that they should be as free from all semblance of panic as Lenin was [*applause*], that they should be as wise and deliberate in deciding complex problems requiring a comprehensive orientation and a comprehensive weighing of all pros and cons as Lenin was [*applause*], that they should be as upright and honest as Lenin was [*applause*], that they should love their people as Lenin did. [*Applause.*]

Can we say that all the candidates are public figures precisely of this kind? I would not say so. There are all sorts of people in the world, there are all sorts of public figures in the world. There are people of whom you cannot say what they are, whether they are good or bad, courageous or timid, for the people heart and soul or for the enemies of the people. There are such people and there are such public figures. They are also to be found among us, the Bolsheviks. You know yourselves, comrades, there are black sheep in every family. [*Laughter and applause.*] Of people of this indefinite type, people who resemble political philistines rather than political figures, people of this vague, uncertain type, the great Russian writer, Gogol, rather aptly said: "Vague sort of people," says he, "neither one thing nor the other, you can't make head or tail of them, they are neither Bogdan in town nor Seliphan in the country." [*Laughter and applause.*] There are also some rather apt popular sayings about such indefinite people and public figures: "A middling sort of man—neither fish nor flesh" [*general laughter and applause*], "neither a candle for god nor a poker for the devil." [*General laughter and applause.*]

I cannot say with absolute certainty that among the candidates (I beg their pardon, of course) and among our public figures there are not people who resemble political philistines more than anything else, who in character and make-up resemble people of the type referred to in the popular saying: "Neither a candle for god nor a poker for the devil." [*Laughter and applause.*]

I would like you, comrades, to exercise systematic influence on your deputies, to impress upon them that they must constantly keep before them the great image of the great Lenin and emulate Lenin in all things. [*Applause.*]

The functions of the electors do not end with the elections. They continue during the whole term of the given Supreme Soviet. I have already mentioned the law which empowers the electors to recall their deputies before the expiration of their term of office if they should turn off the right road. Hence, it is the duty and right of the electors to keep their deputies constantly under their control and to impress upon them that they must under no circumstances sink to the level of political philistines, impress upon them that they must be like the great Lenin. [*Applause.*]

Such, comrades, is my second piece of advice to you, the advice of a candidate to his electors. [*Loud and sustained applause and cheers. All rise and turn towards the government box, to which Comrade Stalin proceeds from the platform. Voices: "Hurrah for the great Stalin!" "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Long live the first of the Leninists, candidate for the Soviet of the Union, Comrade Stalin!"*]

Pravda No. 340,
December 12, 1937

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A RECEPTION IN THE KREMLIN TO HIGHER EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

May 17, 1938

Comrades, permit me to propose a toast to science and its progress, and to the health of the men of science.

To the progress of science, of that science which does not fence itself off from the people and does not hold aloof from them, but which is prepared to serve the people and to transmit to them all the benefits of science, and which does not serve the people under compulsion, but voluntarily and willingly. [*Applause.*]

To the progress of science, of that science which will not permit its old and recognized leaders smugly to invest themselves in the robe of high priests and monopolists of science; which understands the meaning, significance and omnipotence of an alliance between the old scientists and the young scientists; which voluntarily and willingly throws open every door of science to the young forces of our country, and affords them the opportunity of scaling the peaks of science, and which recognizes that the future belongs to the young scientists. [*Applause.*]

To the progress of science, of that science whose devotees, while understanding the power and significance of the established scientific traditions and ably utilizing them in the interests of science, are nevertheless not willing to be slaves of these traditions; the science which has the courage and determination to smash the old traditions, standards and views when they become antiquated and begin to act as a fetter on progress, and which is able to create new traditions, new standards and new views. [*Applause.*]

In the course of its development science has known not a few courageous men who were able to break down the old and create the new, despite all obstacles, despite everything. Such scientists as Galileo, Darwin—and many others—are widely known. I should like to dwell on one of these eminent men of science, one who at the same time was the greatest man of modern times. I am referring to Lenin, our teacher, our tutor. [*Applause.*] Remember 1917. A scientific analysis of the social development of Russia and of the international situation brought Lenin to the conclusion that the only way out of the situation lay in the victory of Socialism in Russia. This conclusion

as a complete surprise to many men of science of the day. Plekhanov, an outstanding man of science, spoke of Lenin with contempt, and declared that he was "raving." Other men of science, no less well-known, declared that "Lenin had gone mad," and that he ought to be put away in a safe place. Scientists of all kinds set up a howl that Lenin was destroying science. But Lenin was not afraid to go against the current, against the force of routine. And Lenin won. [*Applause.*]

Here you have an example of a man of science who boldly fought an antiquated science and laid the road for a new science.

But sometimes it is not well-known men of science who lay the new roads for science and technology, but men entirely unknown in the scientific world, plain, practical men, innovators in their field. Here, sitting at this table, are Comrades Stakhanov* and Papanin.** They are unknown in the scientific world, they have no scientific degrees, but are just practical men in their field. But who does not know that in their practical work in industry Stakhanov and the Stakhanovites have upset the existing standards, which were established by well-known scientists and technologists, have shown that they were antiquated, and have introduced new standards which conform to the requirements of real science and technology? Who does not know that in their practical work on the drifting ice-floe Papanin and the Papaninites upset the old conception of the Arctic, in passing, as it were, without any special effort, showed that it was antiquated, and established a new conception which conforms to the demands of real science? Who can deny that Stakhanov and Papanin are innovators in science, men of our advanced science?

There you see what "miracles" are still performed in science!

I have been speaking of science. But there are all kinds of science. The science of which I have been speaking is *advanced* science.

To the progress of our advanced science!

To the men of advanced science!

To Lenin and Leninism!

To Stakhanov and the Stakhanovites!

To Papanin and the Papaninites! [*Applause.*]

Pravda No. 136,
May 19, 1938

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* Stakhanov, A. (born 1905)—a miner from the Donets Coal Basin, initiated a mass movement for high labour productivity in Soviet industry and agriculture, which became known as the Stakhanov movement.—*Ed.*

** Papanin, I. D. (born 1894)—Arctic explorer, headed the drifting ice-floe station "North Pole." The drift began May 21, 1937 and ended February 19, 1938.—*Ed.*

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE RED ARMY PARADE ON THE RED SQUARE, MOSCOW

NOVEMBER 7, 1941

Comrades, Red Armymen and Red Navymen, commanders and political instructors, working men and working women, collective farmers—men and women, workers engaged in intellectual pursuits, brothers and sisters in the rear of our enemy who have temporarily fallen under the yoke of the German brigands, and our valiant partisans, men and women, who are destroying the rear of the German invaders!

On behalf of the Soviet government and our Bolshevik Party I greet and congratulate you on the 24th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Comrades, it is in strenuous circumstances that we are today celebrating the 24th anniversary of the October Revolution. The perfidious attack of the German brigands and the war which has been forced upon us have placed our country in jeopardy. We have temporarily lost a number of regions; the enemy has appeared at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow. The enemy reckoned that after the very first blow our Army would be dispersed, and our country would be forced to her knees. But the enemy sadly miscalculated. In spite of temporary reverses, our Army and our Navy are heroically repulsing the enemy's attacks along the whole front and inflicting heavy losses upon him, while our country—our entire country—has become transformed into one fighting camp bent on encompassing, together with our Army and our Navy, the defeat of the German invaders.

There have been times when our country was in even more difficult straits. Recall the year 1918, when we celebrated the first anniversary of the October Revolution. Three-quarters of our country was at that time in the hands of foreign invaders. The Ukraine, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Urals, Siberia and the Far East were temporarily lost to us. We had no allies, we had no Red Army—we had only just begun to form it; there was a shortage of food, of armaments, of clothing for the Army. Fourteen states were

encroaching on our country. But we did not become despondent, we did not lose heart. In the fire of war we forged the Red Army and converted our country into a military camp. The spirit of the great Lenin inspired us at the time in the war against the invaders. And what happened? We routed the invaders, recovered all our lost territory, and achieved victory.

Today the position of our country is far better than it was 23 years ago. Our country is now ever so much richer than it was 23 years ago as regards industry, food and raw materials. We now have allies, who together with us are maintaining a united front against the German invaders. We now enjoy the sympathy and support of all the nations of Europe who have fallen under the yoke of Hitler's tyranny. We now have a splendid Army and a splendid Navy, who are staunchly defending the liberty and independence of our country. We experience no serious shortage of either food, or armaments or army clothing. Our entire country, all the peoples of our country, support our Army and our Navy, helping them to smash the invading hordes of German fascists. Our reserves of man power are inexhaustible. The spirit of the great Lenin and his victorious banner inspire us today in this Patriotic War just as they did 23 years ago.

Can there be any doubt that we can and are bound to defeat the German invaders?

The enemy is not so strong as some frightened little intellectuals depict him to be. The devil is not so terrible as he is painted. Who can deny that our Red Army has time and again compelled the vaunted German troops to flee in panic? If we judge, not by the boastful assertions of the German propagandists, but by the actual position of Germany, it will not be difficult to understand that the German fascist invaders are now on the brink of disaster. Hunger and poverty reign in Germany today; in the four months of war Germany has lost four and a half million men; Germany is bleeding at every pore, her reserves of man power are giving out, the spirit of indignation is spreading not only among the peoples of Europe who have fallen under the yoke of the German invaders, but also among the German people themselves, who see no end to the war. The German invaders are exerting their last efforts. There is no doubt that Germany will be unable to stand such a strain for long. Another few months, another half-year, perhaps another year, and Hitler Germany must collapse beneath the weight of her crimes.

Comrades, Red Armymen and Red Navymen, commanders and political instructors, men and women partisans, the whole world is looking to you as the force capable of destroying the plundering hordes of German invaders. The enslaved peoples of Europe who have fallen under the yoke of the German invaders look to you as their liberators. A great liberating mission has fallen to your lot. Be worthy of this mission! The war you are waging is a war of liberation, a just war. Let the heroic images of our great

forebears—Alexander Nevsky, Dimitri Donskoi, Kuzma Minin, Dimitri Pozharsky, Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov—inspire you in this war! May you be inspired by the victorious banner of the great Lenin!

For the utter defeat of the German invaders!

Death to the German invaders!

Long live our glorious Motherland, her liberty and her independence!

Under the banner of Lenin—forward to victory!

Pravda No. 310,
November 8, 1941

V. I. LENIN

SELECTED WORKS

ON MARX AND MARXISM

ON MARX AND MARXISM

THE THREE SOURCES AND THREE COMPONENT PARTS OF MARXISM

Throughout the civilized world the teachings of Marx evoke the utmost hostility and hatred of all bourgeois science (both official and liberal), which regards Marxism as a kind of "pernicious sect." And no other attitude is to be expected, for there can be no "impartial" social science in a society based on class struggle. In one way or another, *all* official and liberal science *defends* wage-slavery, whereas Marxism has declared relentless war on wage-slavery. To expect science to be impartial in a wage-slave society is as silly and naive as to expect impartiality from manufacturers on the question whether workers' wages should be increased by decreasing the profits of capital.

But this is not all. The history of philosophy and the history of social science show with perfect clarity that there is nothing resembling "sectarianism" in Marxism, in the sense of its being a hidebound, petrified doctrine, a doctrine which arose *away from* the highroad of development of world civilization. On the contrary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in the fact that he furnished answers to questions which had already engrossed the foremost minds of humanity. His teachings arose as a direct and immediate *continuation* of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and Socialism.

The Marxian doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is complete and harmonious, and provides men with an integral world conception which is irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the legitimate successor of the best that was created by humanity in the nineteenth century in the shape of German philosophy, English political economy and French Socialism.

On these three sources of Marxism, which are at the same time its component parts, we shall briefly dwell.

I

The philosophy of Marxism is *materialism*. Throughout the modern history of Europe, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century in France, which was the scene of a decisive battle against every kind of mediaeval

rubbish, against feudalism in institutions and ideas* materialism has proved *to be the only philosophy that is consistent, true to all the teachings of* natural science and hostile to superstition, cant and so forth. The enemies of democracy therefore tried in every way to "refute," undermine and defame materialism, and advocated various forms of philosophical idealism, which always, in one way or another, amounts to an advocacy or support of religion.

Marx and Engels always *defended philosophical materialism in the most* determined manner and repeatedly explained the profound erroneousness of every deviation from this basis. Their views are most clearly and fully expounded in the works of Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Anti-Dühring*, which, like the *Communist Manifesto*, are handbooks for every class-conscious worker.

But Marx did not stop at the materialism of the eighteenth century; he advanced philosophy. He enriched it with the acquisitions of German classical philosophy, especially of the Hegelian system, which in its turn led to the materialism of Feuerbach. The chief of these acquisitions is *dialectics, i.e., the doctrine of development in its fullest and deepest form, free of one*-sidedness—the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge, which provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter. The latest discoveries of natural science—radium, electrons, the transmutation of elements—have remarkably confirmed Marx's *dialectical materialism*, despite the teachings of the bourgeois philosophers with their "new" reversions to old and rotten idealism.

Deepening and developing philosophical materialism, Marx completed it, extended its knowledge of nature to the knowledge of *human society*. Marx's *historical materialism* was one of the greatest achievements of scientific thought. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in the views on history and politics gave way to a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism.

Just as man's knowledge reflects nature (*i.e.*, developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (*i. e.*, his various views and doctrines—philosophical, religious, political, and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society. Political institutions are a superstructure on the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of the modern European states serve to fortify the rule of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

Marx's philosophy is finished philosophical materialism, which has provided humanity, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge.

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* The reference here is to the bourgeois revolution in France (1789-1793).—*Ed.*

While increasing the dependence of the workers on capital, the capitalist system creates the great power of united labour.

Marx traced the development of capitalism from the first germs of commodity economy, from simple exchange, to its highest forms, to large-scale production.

And the experience of all capitalist countries, old and new, is clearly demonstrating the truth of this Marxian doctrine to increasing numbers of workers every year.

Capitalism has triumphed all over the world, but this triumph is only the prelude to the triumph of labour over capital.

III

When feudalism was overthrown, and "*free*" capitalist society appeared on God's earth, it at once became apparent that this freedom meant a new system of oppression and exploitation of the toilers. Various Socialist doctrines immediately began to arise as a reflection of and protest against this oppression. But early Socialism was *utopian* Socialism. It criticized capitalist society, it condemned and damned it, it dreamed of its destruction, it indulged in fancies of a better order and endeavoured to convince the rich of the immorality of exploitation.

But utopian Socialism could not point the real way out. It could not explain the essence of wage-slavery under capitalism, nor discover the laws of its development, nor point to the *social force* which is capable of becoming the creator of a new society.

Meanwhile, the stormy revolutions which everywhere in Europe, and especially in France, accompanied the fall of feudalism, of serfdom, more and more clearly revealed the *struggle of classes* as the basis and the motive force of the whole development.

Not a single victory of political freedom over the feudal class was won except against desperate resistance. Not a single capitalist country evolved on a more or less free and democratic basis except by a life and death struggle between the various classes of capitalist society.

The genius of Marx consists in the fact that he was able before anybody else to draw from this and consistently apply the deduction that world history teaches. This deduction is the doctrine of the *class struggle*.

People always were and always will be the stupid victims of deceit and self-deceit in politics until they learn to discover the *interests* of some class behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. The supporters of reforms and improvements will always be fooled by the defenders of the old order until they realize that every old institution, however barbarous and rotten it may appear to be, is maintained by the forces of some ruling classes. And there is *only one* way of smashing the resistance of these classes, and that is to find, in the very society which

THE HISTORICAL DESTINY OF THE DOCTRINE OF KARL MARX

The main thing in the doctrine of Marx is that it brings out the histoi role of the proletariat as the builder of a Socialist society. Has the progress of world events confirmed this doctrine since it was expounded by Marx?

Marx first advanced it in 1844. The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, published in 1848, already gives an integral and systematic exposition of this doctrine, which has remained the best exposition to this day. Subsequent world history clearly falls into three main periods: 1) from the Revolution of 1848 to the Paris Commune (1871); 2) from the Paris Commune to the Russian Revolution (1905); 3) since the Russian Revolution.

Let us see what has been the destiny of Marx's doctrine in each of these periods.

1

At the beginning of the first period Marx's doctrine by no means dominated. It was only one of the extremely numerous factions or trends of Socialism. The forms of Socialism which did dominate were in the main akin to our *Narodism:* non-comprehension of the materialist basis of historical movement, inability to assign the role and significance of each class in capitalist society, concealment of the bourgeois essence of democratic reforms under diverse, pseudo-socialistic phrases about "the people," "justice," "right," etc.

The Revolution of 1848 struck a fatal blow at all these vociferous, motley and ostentatious forms of *pre*-Marxian Socialism. In all countries the revolution revealed the various classes of society *in action*. The shooting down of the workers by the republican bourgeoisie in the June Days of 1848 in Paris finally established that the proletariat *alone* was Socialist by nature. The liberal bourgeoisie feared the independence of this class a hundred times more than it did any kind of reaction. The craven liberals grovelled before reaction. The peasantry were content with the abolition of the relics of feudalism and joined the supporters of order, only wavering at times between *workers' democracy and bourgeois liberalism*. All doctrines of *non*-class Socialism and *non*-class politics proved to be sheer nonsense.

The Paris Commune (1871) completed this development of bourgeois reforms; the republic, *i.e.*, the form of state organization in which class relations appear in their most unconcealed form, had only the heroism of the proletariat to thank for its consolidation.

In all the other European countries a more entangled and less finished development also led to a definitely shaped bourgeois society. Towards the end of the first period (1848-71)—a period of storms and revolutions—pre-Marxian Socialism *died away*. Independent *proletarian* parties were born: the First International (1864-72) and the German Social-Democratic Party.

II

The second period (1872-1904) was distinguished from the first by its "peaceful" character, by the absence of revolutions. The West had finished with bourgeois revolutions. The East had not yet reached that stage.

The West entered a phase of "peaceful" preparation for the future era of change. Socialist parties, basically proletarian, were formed everywhere and learned to make use of bourgeois parliamentarism and to create their own daily press, their educational institutions, their trade unions and their co-operative societies. The Marxian doctrine gained a complete victory and *spread*. The process of selection and accumulation of the forces of the proletariat and of the preparation of the proletariat for the impending battles progressed slowly but steadily.

The dialectics of history were such that the theoretical victory of Marxism obliged its enemies to *disguise themselves* as Marxists. Liberalism, rotten to the core, attempted a revival in the form of Socialist *opportunism*. The opportunists interpreted the period of preparation of forces for the great battles as a renunciation of these battles. The improvement of the position of the slaves for the struggle against wage-slavery they represented as the necessity for the slaves to sell their right to liberty for a mess of pottage. They pusillanimously preached "social peace" (*i.e.*, peace with the slave-owners), the renunciation of the class struggle, and so forth. They had many adherents among Socialist members of parliament, various officials of the labour movement, and the "sympathetic" intellectuals.

III

But the opportunists had scarcely congratulated themselves on "social peace" and the needlessness of storms under "democracy" when a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia. The Russian revolution was followed by the Turkish, the Persian and the Chinese revolutions. It is in this era of storms and their "repercussion" on Europe that we are now living. Whatever may be the fate of the great Chinese Republic, against which the

various "civilized" hyenas are now baring their teeth, no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia, or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses of the people in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

Certain people, who were inattentive to the conditions of preparation and development of the mass struggle, were *driven to despair and to anarchism* by the prolonged postponements of the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe. We can now see how short-sighted and pusillanimous this anarchist despair is.

The fact that Asia, with its population of eight hundred million, has been drawn into the struggle for these same European ideals should inspire us with courage and not despair.

The Asiatic revolutions have revealed the same spinelessness and baseness of liberalism, the same exceptional importance of the independence of the democratic masses, and the same sharp line of division between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of all kinds. *After the experience both of* Europe and Asia, whoever now speaks of *non*-class politics and of *non*-class Socialism simply deserves to be put in a cage and exhibited alongside of the Australian kangaroo.

After Asia, Europe has also begun to stir, although not in the Asiatic way. The "peaceful" period of 1872-1904 has passed completely, never to return. The high cost of living and the oppression of the trusts is leading to an unprecedented accentuation of the economic struggle, which has roused even the British workers, who have been most corrupted by liberalism. Before our eyes a political crisis is brewing even in that extreme "diehard," bourgeois-Junker country, Germany. Feverish armaments and the policy of imperialism are turning modern Europe into a "social peace" which is more like a barrel of gunpowder than anything else. And at the same time the decay of *all* the bourgeois parties and the maturing of the proletariat are steadily progressing.

Each of the three great periods of world history since the appearance of Marxism has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the period of history that is now opening.

Pravda No. 50,
March 1, 1913

MARXISM AND REVISIONISM

There is a saying that if geometrical axioms affected human interests attempts would certainly be made to refute them. Theories of the natural sciences which conflict with the old prejudice of theology provoked, and still provoke, the most rabid opposition. No wonder, therefore, that the Marxian doctrine, which directly serves to enlighten and organize the advanced class in modern society, which indicates the tasks of this class and which proves the inevitable (by virtue of economic development) replacement of the present system by a new order—no wonder that this doctrine had to fight at every step in its course.

There is no need to speak of bourgeois science and philosophy, which are officially taught by official professors in order to befuddle the rising generation of the possessing classes and to "coach" it against the internal and foreign enemy. This science will not even hear of Marxism, declaring that it has been refuted and annihilated. The young scientists who are building their careers by refuting Socialism, and the decrepit elders who preserve the traditions of all the various outworn "systems," attack Marx with equal zeal. The progress of Marxism and the fact that its ideas are spreading and taking firm hold among the working class inevitably tend to increase the frequency and intensity of these bourgeois attacks on Marxism, which only becomes stronger, more hardened, and more tenacious every time it is "annihilated" by official science.

But Marxism by no means consolidated its position immediately even among doctrines which are connected with the struggle of the working class and which are current mainly among the proletariat. In the first half-century of its existence (from the 'forties on) Marxism was engaged in combating theories fundamentally hostile to it. In the first half of the 'forties Marx and Engels demolished the radical Young Hegelians, who professed philosophical idealism. At the end of the 'forties the struggle invaded the domain of economic doctrine, in opposition to Proudhonism. The 'fifties saw the completion of this struggle: the criticism of the parties and doctrines which manifested themselves in the stormy year of 1848. In the 'sixties the struggle was transferred from the domain of general theory to a domain closer to the direct labour movement: the ejection of Bakuninism from the International. In the early 'seventies the stage in Germany was occupied for a short while by the Proudhonist Mühlberger, and in the latter 'seventies by the positiv-

ist Dühring. But the influence of both on the proletariat was already absolutely insignificant. Marxism was already gaining an unquestionable victory over all other ideologies in the labour movement.

By the 'nineties this victory was in the main completed. Even in the Latin countries, where the traditions of Proudhonism held their ground longest of all, the labour parties actually based their programs and tactics on a Marxist foundation. The revived international organization of the labour movement—*in the shape of periodical international congresses*—from the outset, and almost without a struggle, adopted the Marxist standpoint *in all essentials*. But after Marxism had ousted *all* the more or less consistent doctrines hostile to it, the tendencies expressed in those doctrines began to seek other channels. The forms and motives of the struggle changed, but the struggle continued. And the second half-century in the existence of Marxism began (in the 'nineties) with the struggle of a trend hostile to Marxism within Marxism.

Bernstein, a one-time orthodox-Marxist, gave his name to this current by making the most noise and advancing the most integral expression of the amendments to Marx, the revision of Marx, revisionism. Even in Russia, where, owing to the economic backwardness of the country and the preponderance of a peasant population oppressed by the relics of serfdom, non-Marxian Socialism has naturally held its ground longest of all, it is plainly passing into revisionism before our very eyes. Both in the agrarian question (the program of the municipalization of all land) and in general questions of program and tactics, our social-Narodniks are more *and more substituting "amendments" to Marx for the moribund and obsolescent* remnants of the old system, which in its own way was integral and *fundamentally* hostile to Marxism.

Pre-Marxian Socialism has been smashed. It is now continuing the struggle not on its own independent soil but on the *general soil of Marxism*—as revisionism. Let us, then, examine the ideological content of revisionism.

In the domain of philosophy revisionism clung to the skirts of bourgeois professorial "science." The professors went "back to Kant"—and revisionism followed in the wake of the neo-Kantians. The professors repeated, for the thousandth time, the threadbare banalities urged by the priests against philosophical materialism—and the revisionists, smiling condescendingly, mumbled (word for word after the latest *Handbuch*) that materialism had been "refuted" long ago. The professors treated Hegel as a "dead dog," and while they themselves preached idealism, only an idealism a thousand times more petty and banal than Hegel's, they contemptuously shrugged their shoulders at dialectics—and the revisionists floundered after them into the swamp of philosophical vulgarization of science, replacing "artful" (and revolutionary) dialectics by "simple" (and tranquil) "evolution." The professors earned their official salaries by adjusting both their idealist and "critical" systems to the dominant mediaeval "philosophy" (*i.e.*, to theol-

ogy)—and the revisionists drew close to them and endeavoured to make religion a "private affair," not in relation to the modern state, but in relation to the party of the advanced class.

What the real class significance of such "amendments" to Marx was need not be said—it is clear enough. We shall simply note that the only Marxist in the international Social-Democratic movement who criticized from the standpoint of consistent dialectical materialism the incredible banalities uttered by the revisionists was Plekhanov. This must be stressed all the more emphatically since thoroughly mistaken attempts are being made in our day to smuggle in the old and reactionary philosophical rubbish under the guise of criticizing Plekhanov's tactical opportunism.*

Passing to political economy, it must be noted first of all that the "amendments" of the revisionists in this domain were much more comprehensive and circumstantial; attempts were made to influence the public by adducing "new data of economic development." It was said that concentration and the ousting of small-scale production by large-scale production do not occur in agriculture at all while concentration proceeds extremely slowly in commerce and industry. It was said that crises had now become rarer and of less force, and that the cartels and trusts would probably enable capital to do away with crises altogether. It was said that the "theory of the collapse" to which capitalism is heading, was unsound, owing to the tendency of class contradictions to become less acute and milder. It was said, finally, that it would not be amiss to correct Marx's theory of value in accordance with Böhm-Bawerk.

The fight against the revisionists on these questions resulted in as fruitful a revival of the theoretical thought of international Socialism as followed from Engels' controversy with Dühring twenty years earlier. The arguments of the revisionists were analysed with the help of facts and figures. It was proved that the revisionists were systematically presenting modern small-scale production in a favourable light. The technical and commercial superiority of large-scale *production* over small-scale production both in industry and in agriculture is proved by irrefutable facts. But commodity production is far less developed in agriculture, and modern statisticians and economists are usually not very skilful in picking out the special branches (sometimes even operations) in agriculture which indicate that agriculture is being pro-

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gressively drawn into the *exchange* of world economy. Small-scale production maintains itself on the ruins of natural economy by a steady deterioration in nourishment, by chronic starvation, by the lengthening of the working day, by the deterioration in the quality of cattle and in the care given to cattle, in a word, by the very methods whereby handicraft production maintained itself against capitalist manufacture. Every advance in science and technology inevitably and relentlessly undermines the foundations of small-scale production in capitalist society, and it is the task of Socialist economics to investigate this process in all its—often complicated and intricate—forms and to demonstrate to the small producer the impossibility of holding his own under capitalism, the hopelessness of peasant farming under capitalism, and the necessity of the peasant adopting the standpoint of the proletarian. On this question the revisionists sinned from the scientific standpoint by superficially generalizing from facts selected one-sidedly and without reference to the system of capitalism as a whole; they sinned from the political standpoint by the fact that they inevitably, whether they wanted to or not, invited or urged the peasant to adopt the standpoint of the master (*i.e.*, the standpoint of the bourgeoisie), instead of urging him to adopt the standpoint of the revolutionary proletarian.

The position of revisionism was even worse as far as the theory of crises and the theory of collapse were concerned. Only for the shortest space of time could people, and then only the most shortsighted, think of remodelling the foundations of the Marxian doctrine under the influence of a few years of industrial boom and prosperity. Facts very soon made it clear to the revisionists that crises were not a thing of the past: prosperity was followed by a crisis. The forms, the sequence, the picture of the particular crises changed, but crises remained an inevitable component of the capitalist system. While uniting production, the cartels and trusts at the same time, and in a way that was obvious to all, aggravated the anarchy of production, the insecurity of existence of the proletariat and the oppression of capital, thus intensifying class contradictions to an unprecedented degree. That capitalism is moving towards collapse—in the sense both of individual political and economic crises and of the complete wreck of the entire capitalist system—has been made very clear, and on a very large scale, precisely by the latest giant trusts. The recent financial crisis in America and the frightful increase of unemployment all over Europe, to say nothing of the impending industrial crisis to which many symptoms are pointing—all this has brought it about that the recent "theories" of the revisionists are being forgotten by everybody, even, it seems, by many of the revisionists themselves. But the lessons which this instability of the intellectuals has given the working class must not be forgotten.

As to the theory of value, it should only be said that apart from hints and sighs, exceedingly vague, for Böhm-Bawerk, the revisionists have here contributed absolutely nothing, and have therefore left no traces whatever on the development of scientific thought.

In the domain of politics, revisionism tried to revise the very foundation of Marxism, namely, the doctrine of the class struggle. Political freedom, democracy and universal suffrage remove the ground for the class struggle—we were told—and render untrue the old proposition of the *Communist Manifesto* that the workers have no country. For, they said, since the "will of the majority" prevails under democracy, one must neither regard the state as an organ of class rule, nor reject alliances with the progressive, social-reformist bourgeoisie against the reactionaries.

It cannot be disputed that these objections of the revisionists constituted a fairly harmonious system of views, namely, the old and well-known liberal bourgeois views. The liberals have always said that bourgeois parliamentarism destroys classes and class divisions, since the right to vote and the right to participate in state affairs are shared by all citizens without distinction. The whole history of Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the whole history of the Russian revolution at the beginning of the twentieth, clearly show how absurd such views are. Economic distinctions are aggravated and accentuated rather than mitigated under the freedom of "democratic" capitalism. Parliamentarism does not remove, but rather lays bare the innate character even of the most democratic bourgeois republics as organs of class oppression. By helping to enlighten and to organize immeasurably wider masses of the population than those which previously took an active part in political events, parliamentarism does not make for the elimination of crises and political revolutions, but for the maximum accentuation of civil war during such revolutions. The events in Paris in the spring of 1871 and the events in Russia in the winter of 1905 showed as clear as clear could be how inevitably this accentuation comes about. The French bourgeoisie without a moment's hesitation made a deal with the common national enemy, the foreign army which had ruined its fatherland, in order to crush the proletarian movement. Whoever does not understand the inevitable inner dialectics of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy—which tends to an even more acute decision of a dispute by mass violence than formerly—will never be able through parliamentarism to conduct propaganda and agitation that are consistent in principle and really prepare the working-class masses to take a victorious part in such "disputes." The experience of alliances, agreements and blocs with the social-reformist liberals in the West and with the liberal reformists (Constitutional-Democrats) in the Russian revolution convincingly showed that these agreements only blunt the consciousness of the masses, that they weaken rather than enhance the actual significance of their struggle by linking the fighters with the elements who are least capable of fighting and who are most vacillating and treacherous. French Millerandism—the biggest experiment in applying revisionist political tactics on a wide, a really national scale—has provided a practical judgment of revisionism which will never be forgotten by the proletariat all over the world.

A natural complement to the economic and political tendencies of revi-

sionism was its attitude to the final aim of the Socialist movement. "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing"—this catchphrase of Bernstein's expresses the substance of revisionism better than many long arguments. The policy of revisionism consists in determining its conduct from case to case, in adapting itself to the events of the day and to the chops and changes of petty politics; it consists in forgetting the basic interests of the proletariat, the main features of the capitalist system as a whole and of capitalist evolution as a whole, and in sacrificing these basic interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment. And it patently follows from the very nature of this policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms, and that every more or less "new" question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it may change the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the shortest period of time, will always inevitably give rise to one or another variety of revisionism.

The inevitability of revisionism is determined by its class roots in modern society. Revisionism is an international phenomenon. No more or less informed and thinking Socialist can have the slightest doubt that the relation between the orthodox and the Bernsteinites in Germany, the Guesdites and the Jaurèsites (and now particularly the Broussites) in France, the Social-Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party in Great Britain, de Brouckère and Vandervelde in Belgium, the integralists and the reformists in Italy, and the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks in Russia is everywhere essentially similar, notwithstanding the gigantic variety of national and historically-derived conditions in the present state of all these countries. In reality, the "division" within the present international Socialist movement is now proceeding along *one* line in all the various countries of the world, which testifies to a tremendous advance compared with thirty or forty years ago, when it was not like tendencies within a united international Socialist movement that were combating one another within the various countries. And the "revisionism from the Left" which has begun to take shape in the Latin countries, such as "revolutionary syndicalism," is also adapting itself to Marxism while "amending" it; Labriola in Italy and Lagardelle in France frequently appeal from Marx wrongly understood to Marx rightly understood.

We cannot stop here to analyse the ideological substance of *this* revisionism; it has not yet by far developed to the extent that opportunist revisionism has, it has not yet become international, and it has not yet stood the test of one big practical battle with a Socialist Party even in one country. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the "revisionism from the Right" described above.

Wherein lies its inevitability in capitalist society? Why is it more profound than the differences of national peculiarities and degrees of capitalist development? Because always in every capitalist country, side by side with the proletariat, there are broad strata of the petty bourgeoisie, small mas-

ters. Capitalism arose and is constantly arising out of small production. A number of "middle strata" are inevitably created anew by capitalism (appendages to the factory, homework, and small workshops scattered all over the country in view of the requirements of big industries, such as the bicycle and automobile industries, etc.). These new small producers are just as inevitably cast back into the ranks of the proletariat. It is quite natural that the petty-bourgeois world conception should again and again crop up in the ranks of the broad labour parties. It is quite natural that this should be so, and it always will be so right up to the peripety of the proletarian revolution, for it would be a grave mistake to think that the "complete" proletarianization of the majority of the population is essential before such a revolution can be achieved. What we now frequently experience only in the domain of ideology—disputes over theoretical amendments to Marx—what now crops up in practice only over individual partial issues of the labour movement as tactical differences with the revisionists and splits on these grounds, will all unfailingly have to be experienced by the working class on an incomparably larger scale when the proletarian revolution accentuates all issues and concentrates all differences on points of the most immediate importance in determining the conduct of the masses, and makes it necessary in the heat of the fight to distinguish enemies from friends and to cast out bad allies, so as to be able to deal decisive blows at the enemy.

The ideological struggle waged by revolutionary Marxism against revisionism at the end of the nineteenth century is but the prelude to the great revolutionary battles of the proletariat, which is marching forward to the complete victory of its cause despite all the waverings and weaknesses of the petty bourgeoisie.

Originally published in a symposium
entitled *In Memory of Karl Marx,*
St. Petersburg, 1908

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CREATION OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY IN RUSSIA

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WHAT THE "FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE" ARE AND HOW THEY FIGHT THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

(A REPLY TO ARTICLES IN *Russkoye Bogatstvo* OPPOSING THE MARXISTS)

Russkoye Bogatstvo has started a campaign against the Social-Democrats. Last year, in issue No. 10, one of the leading lights of this journal, Mr. N. Mikhailovsky, announced a forthcoming "polemic" against "our so-called Marxists, or Social-Democrats." Then followed an article by Mr. S. Krivenko entitled "Our Cultural Free Lances" (in No. 12), and one by Mr. N. Mikhailovsky entitled "Literature and Life" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, Nos. 1 and 2). As to the magazine's own views on our economic realities, these have been most fully expounded by Mr. S. Yuzhakov in an article entitled "Problems of the Economic Development of Russia" (in Nos. 11 and 12). While in general claiming to present in their magazine the ideas and tactics of the true "friends of the people," these gentlemen are arch-enemies of the Social-Democrats. So let us examine these "friends of the people," their criticism of Marxism, their ideas and their tactics.

Mr. N. Mikhailovsky devotes his attention chiefly to the theoretical principles of Marxism and therefore specially stops to examine the materialist conception of history. After giving a general outline of the contents of the voluminous Marxist literature devoted to this doctrine, Mr. Mikhailovsky launches his criticism with the following tirade:

> "First of all," he says, "the question naturally arises: in which of his works did Marx set forth his materialist conception of history? In *Capital* he gave us a model of logical force combined with erudition and a painstaking investigation both of all the economic literature and of the pertinent facts. He brought to light theoreticians of economic science who had been long forgotten or who are not known to anybody today, and did not overlook the most minute details in the reports of factory inspectors or the evidence given by experts before various special commissions; in a word, he overhauled an overwhelming amount of factual material, partly in order to provide arguments for, and partly to illustrate, his economic theories. If he has created a 'completely new' conception of the historical process, if he has explained the whole past of mankind from a new

point of view and has summarized all philosophico-historical theories that have hitherto existed, he has of course done so with equal thoroughness: he has indeed reviewed and subjected to critical analysis all the known theories of the historical process and analysed a mass of facts of world history. The comparison with Darwin, so customary in Marxist literature, serves still more to confirm this idea. What does Darwin's whole work amount to? Certain closely inter-connected generalizing ideas crowning a veritable Mont Blanc of factual material. Where is the corresponding work by Marx? It does not exist. And not only does no such work by Marx exist, but there is none to be found in all Marxist literature, in spite of its voluminousness and extensiveness."

This whole tirade is highly characteristic and helps us to realize how little the public understand *Capital* and Marx. Overwhelmed by the vast weight and cogency of the exposition, they bow and scrape before Marx, laud him, and at the same time entirely lose sight of the basic content of his doctrine and blithely continue to chant the old songs of "subjective sociology." In this connection one cannot help recalling the pointed epigraph Kautsky selected for his book on the economic teachings of Marx:

Wer wird nicht einen Klopstock loben?
Doch wird ihn jeder lesen? Nein.
Wir wollen weniger erhoben
Und fleissiger gelesen sein!*

Just so! Mr. Mikhailovsky should praise Marx less and read him more diligently, or, better still, put a little more thought into what he is reading.

"In *Capital* Marx gave us a model of logical force combined with erudition," says Mr. Mikhailovsky. In this phrase Mr. Mikhailovsky has given us a model of brilliant phrasemongering combined with absence of meaning—a certain Marxist observed. And the observation is an entirely just one. For, indeed, how did this logical force of Marx's manifest itself? What were its effects? Reading Mr. Mikhailovsky's tirade just quoted one might think that this force was entirely concentrated on "economic theories," in the narrowest sense of the term—and nothing more. And in order still further to emphasize the narrow limits of the field in which Marx displayed his logical force, Mr. Mikhailovsky lays stress on the "most minute details," on the "painstakingness," on the "theoreticians who are not known to anybody," and so forth. It would appear that Marx contributed nothing essentially new or noteworthy to the methods of constructing these theories, that he left the limits of economic science just as they had been with the earlier economists, not extending them and not contributing a "completely new" conception of the science itself. Yet anybody who has read *Capital* knows that this is absolutely untrue. In this connection one cannot refrain

* Who would not praise a Klopstock? But will everybody read him? No. We would like to be exalted less, but read more diligently. *(Lessing.)—Ed.*

from recalling what Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote about Marx sixteen years ago when arguing with that vulgar bourgeois, Mr. Y. Zhukovsky. Perhaps the times were different, perhaps sentiments were fresher—at any rate, the tone and content of Mr. Mikhailovsky's article was then entirely different.

"'...It is the ultimate aim of this work to lay bare the economic law of development (in the original *das ökonomische Bewegungsgesetz*—the economic law of motion) of modern society,' Karl Marx said in reference to his *Capital,* and he adhered to this program with strict consistency." So said Mr. Mikhailovsky in 1877. Let us more closely examine this program, which—as the critic admits—has been adhered to with strict consistency. It is "to lay bare the economic law of development of modern society."

The very formulation confronts us with several questions that require elucidation. Why does Marx speak of "modern" society, when all the economists who preceded him spoke of society in general? In what sense does he use the word "modern," by what tokens does he distinguish this modern society? And further, what is meant by the economic law of motion of society? We are accustomed to hear from economists—and this, by the way, is one of the favourite ideas of the publicists and economists of the milieu to which the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* belongs—that only the production of values is subject to economic laws alone, whereas distribution, they declare, depends on politics, on the nature of the influence exercised on society by the government power, the intelligentsia, and so forth. In what sense, then, does Marx speak of the economic law of motion of society, even referring to this law as a *Naturgesetz*—a law of nature? How is this to be understood, when so many of our native sociologists have covered reams of paper with asseverations to the effect that the sphere of social phenomena is distinct from the sphere of natural-historical phenomena, and that therefore an absolutely distinct "subjective method of sociology" must be applied in the investigation of the former?

These perplexities arise naturally and necessarily, and, of course, one must be utterly ignorant to evade them when dealing with *Capital.* In order to understand these questions, let us first quote one more passage from the Preface to *Capital*—only a few lines lower down:

"[From] my standpoint," says Marx, "the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history."

One has merely to compare, say, the two passages just quoted from the Preface in order to see that this is precisely the basic idea of *Capital,* which, as we have heard, is pursued, with strict consistency and with rare logical force. In connection with all this, let us first note two circumstances: Marx speaks only of one "economic formation of society," the capitalist formation; that is, he says that he investigated the law of development of this formation only and of no other. That, in the first place. And in the second place, let us note the methods used by Marx in working out his deductions. These methods consisted, as we have just heard from Mr. Mikhailovsky, in a "painstaking investigation... of the pertinent facts."

Let us now proceed to examine this basic idea of *Capital,* which our subjective philosopher so adroitly tries to evade. In what, properly speaking, does the concept economic formation of society consist, and in what sense must the development of such a formation be regarded as a process of natural history?—such are the questions that confront us. I have already pointed out that from the standpoint of the old economists and sociologists (not old for Russia), the concept economic formation of society is entirely superfluous: they talk of society in general, they argue with Spencer and his like about the nature of society in general, about the aims and essence of society in general, and so forth. In their reasonings, these subjective sociologists rely on such arguments as that the aim of society is to benefit all its members, that therefore justice demands such and such an organization, and that a system that is out of harmony with this ideal organization ("Sociology must start with a utopia"—these words of one of the authors of the subjective method, Mr. Mikhailovsky, are eminently characteristic of the very essence of their methods) is abnormal and should be set aside.

> "The essential task of sociology," Mr. Mikhailovsky, for instance, argues, "is to ascertain the social conditions under which any particular requirement of human nature is satisfied."

As you see, this sociologist is interested only in a society that satisfies human nature, and is not at all interested in social formations—social formations, moreover, that may be based on phenomena so out of harmony with "human nature" as the enslavement of the majority by the minority. You also see that from the standpoint of this sociologist there can even be no question of regarding the development of society as a process of natural history. ("Having recognized something to be desirable or undesirable, the sociologist must discover the conditions whereby the desirable can be realized, or the undesirable eliminated"—"whereby such and such ideals can be realized"—this same Mr. Mikhailovsky reasons.) Furthermore, there can even be no question of development, but only of deviations from the "desirable," of "defects" that may have occurred *in history as a result* ... as a result of the fact that people were not clever enough, did not properly understand what human nature demands, were unable to discover the conditions required for the realization of such a *rational system. It is obvious* that Marx's basic idea that the development of the economic formations of society is a process of natural history cuts the ground from under this childish morality which lays claim to the *title of sociology. By what method* did Marx arrive at this basic idea? He arrived at it by singling out from the various spheres of social life the economic sphere, by singling out from all social relations the *relations of production as being the basic and prime* relations that determine all other relations. Marx himself has described the course of his reasoning on this question as follows:

take shape without passing through man's consciousness; when exchanging products men enter into relations of production without even realizing that social relations of production are involved in the act) made it at once possible to observe recurrence and regularity and to generalize the systems of the various countries so as to arrive at the single fundamental concept: the *formation of society*. It was this generalization that alone made it possible to proceed from the description of social phenomena (and their evaluation from the standpoint of an ideal) to their strictly scientific analysis, which, let us say by way of example, singles out what distinguishes one capitalist country from another and investigates what is common to all of them.

Thirdly and finally, another reason why this hypothesis was the first to make a *scientific* sociology possible was that the reduction of social relations to relations of production, and of the latter to the level of the forces of production, alone provided a firm basis for the conception that the development of the formations of society is a process of natural history. And it goes without saying that without such a view there can be no social science. (For instance, the subjectivists, although they admitted that historical phenomena conform to law, were incapable of regarding their evolution as a process of natural history, precisely because they confined themselves to the social ideas and aims of man and were unable to reduce these ideas and aims to material social relations.)

But now Marx, having expressed this hypothesis in the 'forties, set out to study the factual (*nota bene*) material. He took one of the economic formations of society—the system of commodity production—and on the basis of a vast mass of data (which he studied for no less than twenty-five years) gave a most detailed analysis of the laws governing the functioning of this formation and its development. This analysis is strictly confined to the relations of production between the members of society: without ever resorting to factors other than relations of production to explain the matter, Marx makes it possible to discern how the commodity organization of social economy develops, how it becomes transformed into the capitalist organization, creating the antagonistic (within the bounds now of the relations of production) classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, how it develops the productivity of social labour, and thereby introduces an element which comes into irreconcilable contradiction with the foundations of this capitalist organization itself.

Such is the *skeleton* of *Capital*. But the whole point of the matter is that Marx did not content himself with this skeleton, that he did not confine himself to an "economic theory" in the ordinary sense of the term, that, while *explaining* the structure and development of the given formation of society *exclusively* in terms of relations of production, he nevertheless everywhere and always went on to trace the superstructure corresponding to these relations of production and clothed the skeleton in flesh and blood. *Capital* has enjoyed such tremendous success precisely because this book of a

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But what is funniest of all is that Mr. Mikhailovsky accuses Marx of not having "reviewed [*sic!*] all the known theories of the historical process." That is amusing indeed. Of what did nine-tenths of these theories consist? Of purely *a priori* dogmatic, abstract disquisitions on: what is society? what is progress? and the like. (I purposely take examples which are dear to the heart and mind of Mr. Mikhailovsky.) But, then these theories are useless because of the very fact that they exist, they are useless because of their basic methods, because of their utter and unrelieved metaphysics. For, to begin by asking what is society and what is progress, is to begin from the wrong end. Whence are you to get your concept of society and progress in general when you have not studied a single social formation in particular, when you have been unable even to establish this concept, when you have been unable even to approach a serious factual investigation, an objective analysis of social relations of any kind? That is the most obvious earmark of metaphysics, with which every science began: as long as people did not know how to study the facts, they always invented *a priori* general theories, which were always sterile. The metaphysical chemist who did not know how to investigate the chemical processes themselves would invent a theory about the nature of the force of chemical affinity. The metaphysical biologist would talk about the nature of life and the vital force. The metaphysical psychologist would reason about the nature of the soul. The method itself was an absurd one. You cannot argue about the soul without having explained the psychical processes in particular: here progress must consist in

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"*German economist*" *exhibited the whole capitalist* social formation to the reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the antagonism of classes inherent in the relations of production, with the bourgeois political superstructure which preserves the domination of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family relations. It will now be clear that the comparison with Darwin is perfectly accurate: *Capital* is nothing but "certain closely inter-connected generalizing ideas crowning a veritable Mont Blanc of factual material." And if anybody who has read *Capital* has contrived not to notice these generalizing ideas, that is not the fault of Marx, who pointed to these ideas even in the Preface, as we have seen. And that is not all; such a comparison is just not only from the external aspect (which for some unknown reason particularly interests Mr. Mikhailovsky), but from the internal aspect too. Just as Darwin put an end to the view that the species of animals and plants are unconnected among themselves, fortuitous, "created by God" and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view that society is a mechanical aggregation of individuals, which allows of any kind of modification at the will of the powers that be (or, what amounts to the same thing, at the will of society and the government) and which arises and changes in a fortuitous way, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum total of given relations of production and by establishing the fact that the development of these formations is a process of natural history.

Now—since the appearance of *Capital*—the materialist conception of history is no longer a hypothesis, but a scientifically demonstrated proposition. And until some other attempt is made to give a scientific explanation of the functioning and development of any formation of society—formation of society, *mind you, and not the mode of life of any country or people, or even class, etc.—another attempt which would be just as capable* as materialism of introducing order into the "pertinent facts" and of presenting a living picture of a definite formation and at the same time of explaining it in a strictly scientific way, until then the materialist conception of history will be synonymous with social science. Materialism is not "primarily a scientific conception of history," as Mr. Mikhailovsky thinks, but the only scientific conception of history.

And now, can one imagine anything funnier than people who have read *Capital*, and contrived not to discover materialism in it! Where is it?—asks Mr. Mikhailovsky in sincere perplexity.

He read *The Communist Manifesto* and failed to notice that the explanation it gives of modern systems—legal, political, family, religious and philosophical—is a materialist one, and that even the criticism of the Socialist and Communist theories seeks and finds their roots in definite relations of production.

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"German economist" exhibited the whole capitalist social formation to the reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the antagonism of classes inherent in the relations of production, with the bourgeois political superstructure which preserves the domination of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family relations. It will now be clear that the comparison with Darwin is perfectly accurate: *Capital* is nothing but "certain closely inter-connected generalizing ideas crowning a veritable Mont Blanc of factual material." And if anybody who has read *Capital has contrived not to notice these generalizing ideas, that is not the* fault of Marx, who pointed to these ideas even in the Preface, as we have seen. And that is not all; such a comparison is just not only from the external aspect (which for some unknown reason particularly interests Mr. Mikhailovsky), but from the internal aspect too. Just as Darwin put an end to the view that the species of animals and plants are unconnected among themselves, fortuitous, "created by God" and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view that society is a mechanical aggregation of individuals, which allows of any kind of modification at the will of the powers that be (or, what amounts to the same thing, at the will of society and the government) and which arises and changes in a fortuitous way, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum total of given relations of production and by establishing the fact that the development of these formations is a process of natural history.

Now—since the appearance of *Capital*—the materialist conception of history *is no longer a hypothesis, but a scientifically demonstrated proposition*. And until some other attempt is made to give a scientific explanation of the functioning and development of any formation of society—formation *of society, mind you, and not the mode of life of any country or people, or* even class, etc.—another attempt which would be just as capable as materialism of introducing order into the "pertinent facts" and of presenting a living picture of a definite formation *and at the same time of explaining it in* a strictly scientific way, until then the materialist conception of history will be synonymous with social science. Materialism is not "primarily a scientific conception of history," as Mr. Mikhailovsky thinks, but the *only* scientific conception of history.

And now, can one imagine anything funnier than people who have read *Capital*, and contrived not to discover materialism in it! Where is *it?*—asks Mr. Mikhailovsky in sincere perplexity.

He read *The Communist Manifesto* and failed to notice that the explanation it gives of modern systems—legal, political, family, religious and philosophical—is a materialist one, and that even the criticism of the Socialist and Communist theories seeks and finds their roots in definite relations of production.

He read *The Poverty of Philosophy* and failed to notice that its examination of Proudhon's sociology is made from the materialist standpoint, that its criticism of the solution propounded by Proudhon for the most diverse historical problems is based on the principles of materialism, and that the indications given by the author himself as to where the data for the solution of these problems is to be sought all amount to references to relations of production.

He read *Capital* and failed to notice that what he had before him was a model scientific analysis, in accordance with the materialist method, of one—the most complex—of the formations of society, a model recognized by all and surpassed by none. And here he sits and exercises his mighty brain over the profound question: "In which of his works did Marx set forth his materialist conception of history?"

Anybody acquainted with Marx would answer this question by another: in which of his works did Marx not set forth his materialist conception of history? But Mr. Mikhailovsky will most likely learn of Marx's materialist investigations only when they are classified and properly indexed in some historico-sophistical work of some Kareyev* or other under the heading "Economic Materialism."

But what is funniest of all is that Mr. Mikhailovsky accuses Marx of not having "reviewed [*sic*!] all the known theories of the historical process." That is amusing indeed. Of what did nine-tenths of these theories consist? Of purely *a priori* dogmatic, abstract disquisitions on: what is society? what is progress? and the like. (I purposely take examples which are dear to the heart and mind of Mr. Mikhailovsky.) But, then these theories are useless because of the very fact that they exist, they are useless because of their basic methods, because of their utter and unrelieved metaphysics. For, to begin by asking what is society and what is progress, is to begin from the wrong end. Whence are you to get your concept of society and progress in general when you have not studied a single social formation in particular, when you have been unable even to establish this concept, when you have been unable even to approach a serious factual investigation, an objective analysis of social relations of any kind? That is the most obvious earmark of metaphysics, with which every science began: as long as people did not know how to study the facts, they always invented *a priori* general theories, which were always sterile. The metaphysical chemist who did not know how to investigate the chemical processes themselves would invent a theory about the nature of the force of chemical affinity. The metaphysical biologist would talk about the nature of life and the vital force. The metaphysical psychologist would reason about the nature of the soul. The method itself was an absurd one. You cannot argue about the soul without having explained the psychical processes in particular: here progress must consist in

* Kareyev, N. I. (1850-1931)—Russian historian-idealist, author of numerous works on the philosophy of history, waged a fierce struggle against Marxism.—*Ed.*

abandoning general theories and philosophical disquisitions about the nature of the soul, and in knowing how to put the study of the facts which characterize any particular psychical process on a scientific footing. And therefore Mr. Mikhailovsky's accusation is exactly as though a metaphysical psychologist, who all his life has been writing "inquiries" into the nature of the soul (without precisely knowing the explanation of a single psychical phenomenon, even the simplest), were to accuse a scientific psychologist of not having reviewed all the known theories of the soul. He, the scientific psychologist, has discarded all philosophical theories of the soul and has set about making a direct study of the material substratum of psychical phenomena—the nervous processes—and has given, let us say, an analysis and explanation of such and such psychological processes. And our metaphysical psychologist reads this work and praises it: the description of the processes and the study of the facts, he says, are good. But he is not satisfied. "Pardon me," he exclaims excitedly, hearing people around him speak of the absolutely new conception of psychology given by this scientist, of his special method of scientific psychology: "Pardon me," the philosopher cries heatedly, "in what work is this method expounded? Why, this work contains 'nothing but facts.' There is no trace in it of a review of 'all the known philosophical theories of the soul.' This is not the corresponding work by any means!"

In the same way, of course, neither is *Capital* the corresponding work for a metaphysical sociologist who does not observe the sterility of *a priori* discussions about the nature of society and who does not understand that such methods, instead of studying and explaining, only serve to insinuate into the concept society either the bourgeois ideas of a British shopkeeper or the philistine Socialist ideals of a Russian democrat—and nothing more. That is why all these philosophico-historical theories arose and burst like soap bubbles, being at best but a symptom of the social ideas and relations of their time, and not advancing one iota man's *understanding* of even a few, but real, social relations (and not such as "harmonize with human nature"). The gigantic forward stride which Marx made in this respect consisted precisely in the fact that he discarded all these discussions about society and progress in general and gave a *scientific* analysis of *one* society and of *one* progress—capitalist society and capitalist progress. And Mr. Mikhailovsky condemns him for having begun from the beginning and not from the end, for having begun with an analysis of the facts and not with final conclusions, with a study of particular, historically-determined social relations and not with general theories about the nature of social relations in general! And he asks: "where is the corresponding work?" O, sapient subjective sociologist!!

If our subjective philosopher had confined himself to expressing his perplexity as to where, in which work, materialism is proved, that would not be quite so bad. But, in spite of the fact (and perhaps for the very reason) that he has nowhere found even an exposition of the materialist

conception of history, let alone a proof of it, he begins to ascribe to this doctrine claims which it has never made. He quotes a passage from Blos to the effect that Marx had proclaimed an entirely new *conception* of history, and without further ado goes on to declare that this theory claims that it has "explained to humanity its past," explained "the whole [*sic*!!?] past of mankind," and so on. But this is utterly false! The theory claims to explain only the capitalist organization of society, and no other. If the application of materialism to the analysis and explanation of one social formation yielded such brilliant results, it is quite natural that materialism in history already ceases to be a mere hypothesis and becomes a scientifically tested theory; it is quite natural that the necessity for such a method should extend to the other social formations, even though they have not been subjected to special factual investigation and to detailed analysis—just as the idea of transformism,* which has been proved in relation to a sufficiently large number of facts, is extended to the whole realm of biology, even though it has not yet been possible definitely to establish the transformation of certain species of animals and plants. And just as transformism does not claim to have explained the "whole" history of the formation of species, but only to have placed the methods of this explanation on a scientific basis, so materialism in history has never claimed to explain everything, but only to have pointed out the "only scientific," to use Marx's expression (*Capital*), method of explaining history. One may therefore judge how ingenious, earnest or seemly are the methods of controversy employed by Mr. Mikhailovsky when he first falsifies Marx by ascribing to materialism in history the absurd claim of "explaining everything," of finding "the key to all historical locks" (claims, of course, which were refuted by Marx immediately and in a very venomous form in his "Letter" on Mikhailovsky's articles), then makes game of these claims, which he himself invented, and, finally, accurately quoting Engels' ideas—accurately, because in this case a quotation and not a paraphrase is given—to the effect that political economy as the materialists understand it "has still to be created" and that "everything we have received from it is confined to" the history of capitalist society—comes to the conclusion that "these words greatly narrow the scope of economic materialism"! What infinite naiveté, or what infinite conceit a man must have to believe that such tricks will pass unnoticed! He first falsifies Marx, then makes game of his own inventions, then accurately quotes certain ideas—and has the insolence to declare that the latter narrow the scope of economic materialism!

The nature and quality of Mr. Mikhailovsky's game may be seen from the following example: "Marx nowhere proves them"—*i.e.*, the foundations of the theory of economic materialism—says Mr. Mikhailovsky. "True, Marx and Engels thought of writing a work of a philosophico-historical and

* *Transformism*—Darwin's theory on the variability of species of animals and plants.—*Ed.*

historico-philosophical character, and even did write one (1845-46), but it was never printed.* Engels says: 'The completed portion [of this work] consists of an exposition of the materialist conception of history which proves only how incomplete our knowledge of economic history was at that time.'** Thus," concludes Mr. Mikhailovsky, "the fundamental points of 'scientific Socialism' and of the theory of economic materialism were discovered, and were then expounded in the *Manifesto*, at a time when, as is admitted by one of the authors himself, their knowledge for such a work was still meagre."

A charming manner of criticism, is it not? Engels says that their knowledge of economic "history" was still meagre and that for this reason they did not print their work of a "general" historico-philosophical character. Mr. Mikhailovsky garbles this to mean that their knowledge was meagre "for such a work" as the elaboration of "the fundamental points of scientific Socialism," that is, of a scientific criticism of the "bourgeois" system, already given in the *Manifesto*. One or the other: either Mr. Mikhailovsky *cannot grasp the difference between an attempt to embrace the whole* philosophy of history, and an attempt to explain the bourgeois regime scientifically, or he thinks that Marx and Engels did not possess sufficient knowledge for a criticism of political economy. And in the latter case it is very cruel of him not to acquaint us with his reasons for assuming this deficiency of knowledge, and not to give his amendments and additions. Marx's and Engels' decision not to publish the historico-philosophical work and to concentrate their efforts on a scientific analysis of one social organization only indicates a very high degree of scientific scrupulousness. Mr. Mikhailovsky's decision to make game of this by a little addition to the effect that Marx and Engels expounded their views when they themselves confessed that their knowledge was inadequate to elaborate them, is only indicative of methods of controversy which testify neither to intelligence nor to a sense of decency.

Here is another example:

"More was done by Marx's *alter ego*, Engels," says Mr. Mikhailovsky, "to prove economic materialism as a theory of history. He has written a special historical work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State in the Light of (im Anschluss) the Researches of Morgan*. This *Anschluss* in noteworthy. The book of the American Morgan*** appeared many years after Marx and Engels had announced the principles of economic materialism and entirely independently of the latter." And so, we find "the economic materialists associating themselves" with this book; and, since *there was no struggle of classes in pre-historic times, introducing an "amend-*

* The work referred to here, "The German Ideology," had been lying for decades in the archives of the German Social Democratic Party and was published for the first time in full in German by the Marx Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow in 1932.—*Ed.*

** See Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Foreword, Eng. ed., 1934 —*Ed.*

*** Reference is to *Ancient Society* etc. by Lewis H. Morgan —*Ed.*

ment" to the formula of the materialist conception of history to the effect that, in addition to the production of material values, a determining factor is the production of man himself, *i.e.*, procreation, which played a primary role in the primitive era, when the productivity of labour was still very undeveloped.

Engels says that "Morgan's great merit lies in having discovered in the groups based on sex of the North American Indians the key to the most important, hitherto insoluble, riddles of the earliest Greek, Roman and German history."

> "And so," pronounces Mr. Mikhailovsky in this connection, "at the end of the 'forties there was discovered and proclaimed an absolutely new, materialist and truly scientific conception of history, which did for historical science what Darwin's theory did for modern natural science."

But this conception—Mr. Mikhailovsky once more repeats—was never scientifically proved.

> "It was not only never tested in a large and varied field of factual material [*Capital* is "not the corresponding" work: it contains only facts and painstaking investigations!], but was not even sufficiently justified, if only by the criticism and exclusion of other philosophico-historical systems."

Engels' book—*Herrn E. Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft**—represents "only clever attempts made in passing," and Mr. Mikhailovsky therefore considers it possible completely to ignore the vast number of essential questions dealt with in that work, in spite of the fact that these "clever attempts" very cleverly show the emptiness of sociologies which "start with utopias," and in spite of the fact that this book contains a detailed criticism of the "force theory," which asserts that political and legal systems determine economic systems and which is so fervently professed by the journalistic gentlemen of *Russkoye Bogatstvo.* Of course, it is much easier to say a few meaningless phrases about a work than to make a serious analysis of even one question materialistically dealt with in it. And it is also safe—for the censor will probably never pass a translation of the book, and Mr. Mikhailovsky may call it clever without any danger to his subjective philosophy.

Even more characteristic and edifying is his comment on Marx's *Capital* (a comment which serves as an illustration to the saying that man was given a tongue to conceal his thoughts—or to lend vacuity the form of thought):

> "There are brilliant pages of history in *Capital, BUT* [that wonderful "but"! It is not so much a "but," as that famous *mais,* which translated means "the poor fellow can only do his best"], by the very

* *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring).—Ed.*

purpose of the book, they concern only one *definite historical period;* they do not so much affirm the basic propositions of economic materialism as simply deal with the económic aspect of a certain group of historical phenomena."

In other words, *Capital*—which is devoted only to a study of capitalist *society—gives a materialist analysis of that society and its* superstructures, *"BUT"* Mr. Mikhailovsky prefers to say nothing about this analysis. It deals, don't you see, with only "one" period, whereas he, Mr. Mikhailovsky, wants to embrace all periods, and embrace them in such a way as not to say anything about any one of them in particular. Of course, this aim—of embracing all periods without discussing any one of them in substance—can be achieved only in one way—by general talk and "brilliant" but empty phrasemongering. And nobody can compare with Mr. Mikhailovsky in the art of phrasemongering. *It turns out that it is not worth dealing* (separately) with the substance of Marx's investigations for the reason that he, Marx, "not so much affirms the basic propositions of economic materialism as simply deals with the economic aspect of a certain group of historical phenomena." What profundity! He "does not affirm," but "simply deals with!" How easy it is to dodge any issue by phrasemongering! For instance, when Marx repeatedly shows that civil equality, free contract and similar foundations of the law-governed state rest on the relations of commodity *producers—what is that? Does he thereby affirm materialism,* or *"simply"* deal with it? With his inherent modesty, our philosopher refrains from giving a reply on the substance of the question and directly proceeds to draw conclusions from his "clever attempts" to talk brilliantly and say nothing.

"*It is not surprising,*" *the conclusion runs,* "*that for a theory which* claimed to elucidate world history, forty years after its announcement early Greek, Roman and German history remained unsolved riddles; and the key to these riddles was provided, *firstly, by a man who had* absolutely no connection with the theory of economic materialism and knew nothing about it, and, secondly, with the help of a factor which was not economic. A rather amusing impression is produced by the term 'production of man himself,' *i.e.*, procreation, on which Engels seizes in order to preserve at least a verbal connection with the basic formula of economic materialism. He was, however, obliged to admit that for many ages the life of mankind did not proceed in accordance *with this formula.*"

Indeed, Mr. Mikhailovsky, the way you argue is very "surprising." The *theory* was that in order to "elucidate" history one must seek for the foundations in material social relations and not in ideological relations. Lack of factual material made it impossible to apply this method to an analysis of certain very *important phenomena in ancient European history*—

for instance, of the gentile organization—which in consequence remained a riddle.* But along comes Morgan in America and the wealth of material he has collected enables him to analyse the nature of the gentile organization; and he comes to the conclusion that one must seek for its explanation in material relations, and not in ideological relations (*e.g.*, legal or religious). Obviously, this fact is a brilliant confirmation of the materialist method, and nothing more. And when Mr. Mikhailovsky *rebukes* this doctrine on the grounds, firstly, that the key to most difficult historical riddles was found by a man "who had absolutely no connection" with the theory of economic materialism, one can only wonder at the extent to which people can fail to distinguish what speaks in their favour from what cruelly demolishes them. Secondly—our philosopher argues—procreation is not an economic factor. But where have you read in Marx or in Engels that they necessarily spoke of economic materialism? When they described their world outlook they called it simply materialism. Their basic idea (which was quite definitely expressed, for instance, in the passage from Marx above quoted) was that social relations are divided into material relations and ideological relations. The latter merely constitute a superstructure on the former, which arise apart from the volition and consciousness of man as (a result) a form of man's activity aiming at the preservation of his existence. The explanation of political and legal forms—Marx says in the passage quoted—must be sought for in "the material conditions of life." Mr. Mikhailovsky surely does not think that the relations of procreation are ideological conditions? The explanation given by Mr. Mikhailovsky in this connection is so characteristic that it deserves to be dwelt on.

"However much we exercise our ingenuity on the question of 'procreation,' " he says, "and endeavour to establish if only a verbal connection between it and economic materialism, however much it may be interwoven in the complex web of phenomena of social life with other phenomena, including economic, it has its own physiological and psychical roots. [Is it suckling infants you are telling, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that procreation has physiological roots!? What sort of blarney is this?] And this reminds us that the theoreticians of economic materialism have not settled accounts not only with history, but also with psychology. There can be no doubt that gentile ties have lost their significance in the history of civilized countries, but this can hardly be said with the same assurance of direct sexual and family ties. They have of course undergone considerable modification under the pressure of the increasing complexity of life in general, but with a certain amount of dialectical dexterity it might be shown that not

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> only legal, but also economic relations themselves constitute a 'superstructure' on sexual and family relations. We shall not dwell on this, but nevertheless would point to the institution of inheritance."

At last our philosopher has managed to leave the sphere of empty phrasemongering* for facts, definite facts, which can be verified and which make it less easy to "blarney" about the substance of the matter. Let us then see how our critic of Marx shows that the institution of inheritance is a superstructure on sexual and family relations.

> "It is the products of economic production ["the products of economic production"!! How literary! How euphonious! How elegant!] that are transmitted by inheritance, and the institution of inheritance itself is to a certain extent determined by the fact of economic competition. But, firstly, non-material values are also transmitted by inheritance—as expressed in the concern to bring up children in the spirit of their fathers."

And so the upbringing of children is part of the institution of inheritance! The Russian Civil Code for example, contains a clause to the effect that "parents must endeavour by home upbringing to train their [*i.e.*, their children's] morals and to further the views of the government." Is this what our philosopher calls the institution of inheritance?—

> "and, secondly, even when we confine ourselves to the economic sphere, if the institution of inheritance is unthinkable without the products of production that are transmitted by inheritance, it is just as unthinkable without the products of 'procreation'—without them and without that complex and intense psychology which directly borders on them."

(*Do pay attention to the style: a* complex psychology *"borders on"* the products of procreation! That is really exquisite!) And so the institution of inheritance is a superstructure on family and sexual relations, because inheritance is unthinkable without procreation! Why, this is a veritable discovery of America! Until now everybody believed that procreation can explain the institution of inheritance just as little as the necessity for taking food can explain the institution of property. Until now *everybody thought* that if, for instance, in the era when the system of tenure in fee (*pomestiye*)**

* How else, indeed, can one characterize it, when he accuses materialists of not having settled accounts with history but does not attempt to examine *literally a single one* of the numerous materialist explanations of various historical questions given by the materialists, or when he says that a thing might be shown, but that he will not dwell on it?

** The *pomestiye system* was a peculiar system of feudal land holding prevailing in Russia in the middle of the 15th century. The *pomestiye* (estate) was considered property of the feudal sovereign and was originally enfeoffed by him to noblemen in temporary and conditional possession as reward for war or court service.—*Ed.*

flourished in Russia, the land was not transmissible by inheritance (because it was only regarded as conditional property), the explanation was to be sought in the peculiarities of the social organization of the time. Mr. Mikhailovsky presumably thinks that the matter is to be explained simply by the fact that the psychology which bordered on the products of procreation of the fief-holder of that time was distinguished by insufficient complexity.

Scratch the "friend of the people"—one might say, paraphrasing the familiar saying—and you will find a bourgeois. For what other meaning can be attached to Mr. Mikhailovsky's reflections on the connection between the institution of inheritance and the upbringing of children, the psychology of procreation, and so on, except that the institution of inheritance is just as eternal, essential and sacred as the upbringing of children? True, Mr. Mikhailovsky tried to leave himself a loophole by declaring that "the institution of inheritance is to a certain extent determined by the fact of economic competition." But that is nothing but an attempt to avoid giving a definite answer to the question, and an unseemly attempt at that. How can we take cognizance of this statement when not a word is said about what exactly the "certain extent" is to which inheritance depends on competition, when absolutely no explanation is given of what exactly this connection between competition and the institution of inheritance is due to? As a matter of fact, the institution of inheritance already presumes the existence of private property; and the latter arises only with the appearance of exchange. Its basis is in the already incipient specialization of social labour and the alienation of products in the market. For instance, as long as all the members of the primitive Indian community produced in common all the articles they required, private property was impossible. But when division of labour made its way into the community and each of its members began to produce separately some one article or other and to sell it in the market, this material isolation of the commodity producer found expression in the institution of private property. Both private property and inheritance are categories of a social order in which separate, small (monogamous) families have already arisen and exchange has begun to develop. Mr. Mikhailovsky's example proves precisely the opposite of what he wanted to prove.

Mr. Mikhailovsky gives another factual reference—and this too is in its way a gem!

> "As regards gentile ties," he says, continuing to put materialism right, "they paled in the history of civilized peoples partially, it is true, under the rays of the influence of the forms of production [another subterfuge, this time more obvious still. What forms of production precisely? An empty phrase!], but partially they became dissolved in their own continuation and generalization—in national ties."

And so, national ties are a continuation and generalization of gentile ties! Mr. Mikhailovsky, evidently, borrows his ideas of the history of

society from the fairy tale that is taught to schoolboys. The history of society—this copy-book maxim runs—is that first there was the family, that nucleus of all society,* then the family grew into the tribe, and the tribe *grew into the state. If* Mr. Mikhailovsky *impressively repeats* this childish nonsense, it only goes to show—apart from everything else—that he has not the slightest inkling of the course even of Russian history. While one might speak of gentile life in ancient Russia, there can be no doubt that by the Middle Ages, the era of the Muscovite tsars, these gentile ties no longer existed, that is to say, the state was based on territorial unions and not gentile unions: the landlords and the monasteries took their peasants from various localities, and the communities thus formed were purely territorial unions. However, one could hardly at that time *speak of national ties in the true sense of the word: the state was divided* into separate "territories," sometimes even principalities, which preserved strong traces of former autonomy, peculiarities of administration, at times their own troops (the local boyars went to war at the head of their own companies), their own customs frontiers, and so forth. It is only the modern period of Russian history (beginning approximately with the seventeenth century) that is marked by an actual amalgamation of all such regions, territories and principalities into a single whole. This amalgamation, most esteemed Mr. Mikhailovsky, was not brought about by gentile *ties, nor even by their continuation, and generalization, but by the growth* of exchange between regions, the steady growth of commodity circulation and the concentration of the small local markets into a single, all-Russian market. Since the leaders and masters of this process were the merchant capitalists, the creation of these national ties was nothing but the creation of bourgeois ties. By both his factual references Mr. Mikhailovsky has only defeated his own purpose and has given us nothing but examples of bourgeois puerility. "Puerility," because he explained the institution of inheritance by procreation and its psychology, and nationality by gentile ties; "bourgeois," because he took the categories and superstructures of one historically-defined social formation (that based on exchange) for categories just as general and eternal as the upbringing of children and "direct" sexual ties.

What is so highly characteristic here is that as soon as our subjective *philosopher tried to pass from phrasemongering to concrete facts he got* himself into a mess. And apparently he feels very much at ease in this not over-clean position: there he sits, preening himself and splashing mud all around him. For instance, he wants to refute the thesis that history is a succession of episodes of the class struggle, and, declaring with an air of profundity that this is "extreme," he says: "The International

* This is a purely bourgeois idea: separate, small families came to predominate only under the bourgeois regime; they were entirely non-existent in pre-historic times. Nothing is more characteristic of the bourgeois than the ascription of the features of the modern system to all times and peoples.

Workingmen's Association, formed by Marx and organized for the purposes of the class struggle, did not prevent the French and German workers from cutting each other's throats. and despoiling each other," which, he asserts, proves that materialism has not settled accounts "with the demon of national vanity and national hatred." Such a statement reveals the critic's utter failure to realize that the very real interests of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie constitute the principal basis for this hatred, and that to speak of national sentiment as an independent factor is only to gloss over the real facts of the case. But then we have already seen what a profound idea of nationality our philosopher has. Mr. Mikhailovsky cannot refer to the International except with the irony of a Burenin.*

> "Marx is the head of the International Workingmen's Association, which, it is true, has fallen to pieces, but is due to be resurrected."

Of course, if one discerns the *nec plus ultra* of international solidarity in a system of "just" exchange, as the chronicler of home affairs in No. 2 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* asserts, with philistine banality and if one does not understand that exchange, just and unjust, invariably presumes and includes the domination of the bourgeoisie, and that, unless the economic organization which is based on exchange is destroyed, international collisions are inevitable, this incessant sneering at the International is understandable. It is then understandable why Mr. Mikhailovsky cannot grasp the simple truth that there is no other way of combating national hatred than by organizing and welding together the oppressed class for a struggle against the oppressor class in each separate country, and by the amalgamation of such national working-class organizations into a single international working-class army to fight international capital. As to the statement that the International did not prevent the workers from cutting each others' throats, it is enough to remind Mr. Mikhailovsky of the events of the Commune, which revealed the true attitude of the organized proletariat to the ruling classes who were waging the war.

But what is most disgusting in Mr. Mikhailovsky's polemic is the methods he employs. If he is dissatisfied with the tactics of the International, if he does not share the ideas on behalf of which the European workers are organizing, let him at least criticize them bluntly and openly and set forth his own idea of what would be more expedient tactics and more correct views. As it is, no definite and clear objections are made, and all we get are senseless jibes amidst a welter of phrasemongering. What can one call this but mud, especially when one bears in mind that a defence of the ideas and tactics of the International is not legally allowed in Russia? Such too are the methods Mr. Mikhailovsky employs when he

* V. Burenin—a member of the staff of the reactionary newspaper *Novoye Vremya (New Times)* notorious for his malignant and vicious attacks on representatives of all progressive trends of social thought. Lenin applies this name appellatively to denote unscrupulous methods in conducting polemics.—*Ed.*

argues against the Russian Marxists: without giving himself the trouble to formulate any of their theses conscientiously *and accurately, so as to* subject them to direct and definite criticism, he prefers to fasten on fragments of Marxist arguments he happens to have heard and to garble them. Judge for yourselves:

> "Marx was too intelligent and too learned to think that it was he who discovered the idea of the historical necessity of social phenomena and their conformity to law.... The lower rungs [of the Marxist ladder*] do not know this [that "the idea of historical necessity is not something new, invented or discovered *by* Marx, *but a long-*established truth"], or, at least, they have only a vague idea of the centuries of intellectual effort and energy that were spent on the establishment of this truth."

Of course, statements of this kind may very well make an impression on people who hear of Marxism for the first time, and in their case the aim of the critic may be easily achieved, namely, to garble, scoff and "conquer" (such, it is said, is the way contributors to *Russkoye Bogatstvo* speak of Mr. Mikhailovsky's articles). *Anybody who has any knowledge* of Marx at all will immediately perceive the utter falsity and sham of such methods. One may not agree with Marx, but one cannot deny that those of his views which constitute "something new" in relation to those of the earlier Socialists he did formulate very definitely. The something new consisted in the fact that the earlier Socialists thought it was enough to prove their views to point to the oppression of the masses under the existing regime, to point to the superiority of a system under which every man would receive what he himself had produced, to point out that this ideal system harmonizes with "human nature," *with the conception of a* rational and moral life, and so forth. Marx found it impossible to rest content with such a Socialism. He did not confine himself to describing the existing system, giving a judgment of it and condemning it; he gave a scientific explanation of it, reducing that existing system, which differs in the different European and non-European countries, to a common basis —the capitalist social formation, the laws of the functioning and development of which he subjected to an objective analysis (he showed the *necessity* of exploitation under such a system). In just the same way, he did not find it possible to rest content with *asserting that only the Socialist*

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* In connection with this meaningless term it should be stated that Mr. Mikhailovsky singles out Marx (who is too intelligent and too learned—for our critic to be able to criticize any of his propositions directly and openly), after whom *he places* Engels ("not such a creative mind"), next more or less independent men like Kautsky—and then *the other Marxists. Well, can such a classification have any serious* value? If the critic is dissatisfied with the popularizers of Marx, what prevents him *from correcting* them on the basis of Marx? He does nothing of the kind. He evidently meant to be witty—but it fell flat.

system harmonizes with human nature, as was claimed by the great utopian Socialists and by their wretched offspring, the subjective sociologists. By this same *objective* analysis of the capitalist system, he proved the *necessity* of its transformation into the Socialist system. (Precisely how he proved this and how Mr. Mikhailovsky objected to it is a question we shall revert to.) That is the source of those references to necessity which we may frequently meet with among Marxists. The distortion which Mr. Mikhailovsky introduced into the question is obvious: he dropped the whole factual content of the theory, its whole essence, and presented the matter as though the whole theory were contained in the one word "necessity" ("one cannot refer to it alone in complex practical affairs"), as though the *proof* of this theory consists in the fact that historical necessity so demands it. In other words, saying nothing about the contents of the doctrine, he seized on its label only, and again started to make game of that "simple flat disc," into which he himself had tried so hard to transform Marx's teaching. We shall not, of course, endeavour to follow this game, because we are already sufficiently acquainted with that sort of thing. Let him cut capers for the amusement and satisfaction of Mr. Burenin (who not without good reason patted Mr. Mikhailovsky on the back in *Novoye Vremya*), let him pay his respects to Marx and then yelp at him from round the corner: "His controversy against the utopians and idealists is one-sided as it is," that is without the Marxists repeating its arguments. We cannot call such sallies anything else but yelping, because he literally does not bring a *single* factual, definite and verifiable objection against this controversy, so that, willing as we might be to discuss the subject,—for we consider this controversy extremely important for the settlement of Russian Socialist questions—we simply cannot reply to yelping, and can only shrug our shoulders and say:

"The lapdog must be strong indeed if at an elephant he barks!"

Not without interest is what Mr. Mikhailovsky goes on to say about historical necessity, because it reveals, if only partially, the real ideological stock-in-trade of "our well-known sociologist" (the epithet which Mr. Mikhailovsky, equally with Mr. V. V.,* enjoys among the liberal members of "cultured society"). He speaks of "the conflict between the idea of historical necessity and the importance of individual activity": socially active figures err in regarding themselves as active figures, when as a matter of fact they are "activated," "marionettes, manipulated from a mysterious cellar by the immanent laws of historical necessity"—such, he claims, is the conclusion to be drawn from this idea, which he therefore characterizes as "sterile" and "diffuse." Probably not every reader knows where Mr. Mikhailovsky got all this nonsense about marionettes and the like. The fact is that this is one of the favourite hobby-horses of the subjective philosopher—the idea of the conflict between determinism and

* *Mr. V. V.*—V. P. Vorontsov, an exponent of liberal Narodism in the 'nineties.—*Ed.*

morality, between historical necessity and the importance of the individual. He has filled piles of paper on the subject and has uttered an infinite amount of sentimental, philistine trash in *order to settle this conflict in* favour of morality and the importance of the individual. As a matter of fact, there is no conflict here at all; it has been invented by Mr. Mikhailovsky, who feared (not without reason) that *determinism would* cut the ground from *under* the philistine morality he loves so dearly. The idea of determinism, which establishes the necessity of human acts and rejects the absurd fable of freedom of will, in no way *destroys man's reason or conscience*, or *judgment* of his actions. Quite the contrary, the determinist view alone makes a strict and correct judgment possible, instead of attributing everything one fancies to freedom of will. Similarly, the idea of historical *necessity in no way undermines* the role *of the individual in* history: all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures. The real question that arises in judging the social *activity* of an individual *is: what conditions* ensure the *success of this* activity, what guarantee is there that this activity will not remain an isolated act lost in a welter of contrary acts? This also involves a question which is answered differently by Social-Democrats and by the other Russian Socialists, *namely*, in what way must activity which aims at bringing about the Socialist system enlist the masses in order to secure real results? Obviously, the answer to this question depends directly and immediately on *the conception of the grouping of social forces* in Russia, *of the class* struggle which forms the substance of Russian actualities. And here too Mr. Mikhailovsky dances around the question without even attempting to *state it precisely and to* furnish an answer to it. The Social-Democratic answer to the question, as we know, is based on *the* view *that* the *Russian* economic system is a bourgeois society, from which there can be only one *way out, one that necessarily follows from the* very nature *of the* bourgeois *system*, *namely*, the class struggle *of the proletariat* against the bourgeoisie. It is obvious that any serious criticism ought *to* be directed *either* against the view that our system is a bourgeois system or against *the* conception of the nature of this system and the laws of its development. But Mr. Mikhailovsky *does not even* think of dealing with serious questions. He prefers to confine himself to meaningless *phrasemongering about* necessity being too general a parenthesis, and the like. Yes, Mr. Mikhailovsky, any idea will be too general a parenthesis if you first take all the insides *out of* it, as *though* it were dried *herring, and then* begin to play about with the skin. This outer skin, which covers really *serious and* burning questions of the day, is Mr. Mikhailovsky's favourite sphere; for instance, he stresses with particular pride the fact that "economic materialism ignores *or throws a wrong* light on the *question* of heroes and the crowd." Don't you see, the question—which are the classes whose *struggle* forms the substance of modern Russian actualities, and on what grounds? —is probably too general for Mr. Mikhailovsky, and he avoids it. On the

other hand, the question—what relations exist between the hero and the crowd?—irrespective of whether it is a crowd of workers, peasants, manufacturers or landlords, is one that interests him extremely. These questions may be really "interesting," but anybody who rebukes the materialists for directing all their efforts to the settlement of questions which directly concern the liberation of the labouring class is an admirer of philistine science, and nothing more. Concluding his "criticism" (?) of materialism, Mr. Mikhailovsky makes one more attempt to misrepresent facts and performs one more manipulation. Having expressed doubt as to the correctness of Engels' opinion that *Capital* was hushed up by the official economists (a doubt he justifies on the curious grounds that there are numerous universities in Germany!), Mr. Mikhailovsky says:

> "Marx did not have this circle of readers [workers] in view, but expected something from men of science too."

That is absolutely untrue. Marx understood very well how little he could expect impartiality and scientific criticism from the bourgeois scientist, and in the *Nachwort* (*Postscript*) to the second edition of *Capital* he expressed himself very positively on this score. He there says:

> "The understanding which *Capital* rapidly met with among wide circles of the German working class is the best reward for my labour. Herr Meyer, a man who on economic questions adheres to the bourgeois standpoint, aptly stated in a pamphlet which appeared during the Franco-Prussian War that the great capacity for theoretical thinking (*der große theoretische Sinn*) which was regarded as the heritage of the Germans has completely disappeared among the so-called educated classes of Germany, but, on the other hand, is being born anew in her working class."

The manipulation again concerns materialism and is entirely in the style of the first sample. "The theory [of materialism] has never been scientifically proved and verified." Such is the thesis. Here is the proof:

> "Individual good pages of historical content in Engels, Kautsky and certain others also (as in the esteemed work of Blos) might well dispense with label economic materialism, since [note the "since"!], in fact [*sic!*], they take the sum total of social life into account, even though the economic strings predominate in the chord."

And the conclusion—"Economic materialism has not justified itself in science."

A familiar trick! In order to prove that the theory lacks foundation, Mr. Mikhailovsky first distorts it by ascribing to it the absurd intention of not taking the sum total of social life into account, whereas quite the opposite is the case: the materialists (Marxists) were the first Socialists to insist on the need of analysing all aspects of social life, and not only

the economic.* Then he declares that "in fact" the materialists have "effectively" explained the sum total of social life *by economics* (a fact which obviously destroys the author)—and finally he comes to the conclusion that materialism "has not justified itself"! But your manipulations on the other hand, Mr. Mikhailovsky, have justified themselves magnificently!

And this is all that Mr. Mikhailovsky brings forward in "refutation" of materialism. I repeat, there is no criticism here, it is nothing but vapid and pretentious verbosity. If we were to ask any person what objections Mr. Mikhailovsky has brought against the view that the relations of production form the basis of all others, how he has disproved the concept formations of society and the natural-historical process of development of these formations worked out by Marx with the help of the materialist method, how he has proved the fallacy of the materialist explanations of various historical questions given, for instance, by the writers he has mentioned—that person would have to answer that he has brought no objections, has in no way disproved, and has pointed out no fallacies. He has merely beat about the bush, trying to confuse the essence of the matter by phrasemongering, and in passing has invented various piffling subterfuges.

It is hard to expect anything serious of such a critic when he continues to refute Marxism in No. 2 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. The only difference is that he has already exhausted his own power of inventing manipulations and begins to avail himself of those of others.

He starts out by declaiming about the "complexity" of social life: why, even galvanism is connected with economic materialism, because Galvani's experiments "produced an impression" on Hegel. Astonishingly clever! One could just as easily connect Mr. Mikhailovsky with the Emperor of China! What are we to deduce from this—apart from the fact that there are people who find pleasure in talking nonsense?!

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* This has been quite clearly expressed in *Capital* and in the tactics of the Social-Democrats, as compared with the earlier Socialists. Marx directly demanded that we should not confine ourselves to the economic aspect. In 1843, when drafting the program for a projected magazine, Marx wrote to Ruge: "The whole Socialist principle is again only one aspect. . . . We, on our part, must devote equal attention to the other aspect, the theoretical existence of man, and consequently must make religion, science, and so forth, an object of our criticism. . . . Just as *religion* represents a table of contents of the theoretical conflicts of mankind, the *political state* represents a table of contents of its practical conflicts. Thus, the political state, within the limits of its form, expresses *sub specie rei publicae* [from the political standpoint] all social conflicts, needs and interests. Hence to make a most special political question—*e.g.*, the difference between the estate system and the representative system—an object of criticism by no means implies descending from the *hauteur des principes* [the height of principles.—*Ed.*], since this question expressed in *political* language the difference between the rule of man and the rule of private property. This means that the critic not only may but must deal with these political questions (which the inveterate Socialist considers unworthy of attention)."

"The essence of the historical course of things," Mr. Mikhailovsky continues, "which is elusive in general, has eluded the doctrine of economic materialism, although the latter apparently rests on two pillars: the discovery of the all-determining significance of the forms of production and exchange and the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process."

And so, the materialists rest their case on the "unimpeachableness" of the dialectical process! In other words, they base their sociological theories on Hegelian triads. Here we have the stereotyped charge of Hegelian dialectics levelled against Marxism, a charge which one thought had already been worn sufficiently threadbare by Marx's bourgeois critics. Unable to bring anything against the doctrine itself, these gentlemen fastened on Marx's mode of expression and attacked the origin of the theory, thinking thereby to undermine the theory itself. And Mr. Mikhailovsky makes no bones about resorting to similar methods. He uses a chapter from Engels' *Anti-Dühring* as a pretext. Replying to Dühring, who had attacked Marx's dialectics, Engels says that Marx never even thought of "proving" anything by means of Hegelian triads, that Marx only studied and investigated the real process, and that he regarded the conformity of a theory to reality as its only criterion. If, however, it sometimes transpired that the development of any particular social phenomenon conformed with the Hegelian scheme, namely, thesis—negation—negation of the negation, that is not at all surprising, for it is no rare thing in nature generally. And Engels proceeds to cite examples from the field of natural history (the development of a seed) and from the social field—as for instance, that first there was primitive Communism, then private property, and then the capitalist socialization of labour; or that first there was primitive materialism, then idealism, and then scientific materialism, and so forth. It is clear to everybody that the main burden of Engels' argument is that materialists must correctly and accurately, depict the historical process, and that insistence on dialectics, the selection of examples to demonstrate the correctness of the triad, is nothing but a relic of the Hegelianism out of which scientific Socialism has grown, a relic of its mode of expression. And, indeed, once it has been categorically declared that to attempt to "prove" anything by triads is absurd, and that nobody even thought of doing so, what significance can examples of "dialectical" processes have? Is it not obvious that they merely point to the origin of the doctrine, and nothing more? Mr. Mikhailovsky himself feels this when he says that the theory should not be blamed for its origin. But in order to discern in Engels' arguments something more than the origin of the theory, it would obviously be necessary to prove that the materialists had settled at least one historical *problem* by means of triads, and not on the basis of the pertinent facts. Did Mr. Mikhailovsky attempt to prove this? Not a bit of it. On the contrary, he was himself obliged to admit that "Marx filled the empty dialectical scheme so full with factual content that it could be removed from this content like a lid from a bowl without anything being changed" (as

to the exception which Mr. Mikhailovsky makes here—regarding the future —we shall deal with it anon). If that is so, why is Mr. Mikhailovsky so eagerly concerned with this lid that changes nothing? Why does he assure us that the materialists "rest" their case on the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process? Why, when he is combating this lid, does he declare that he is combating one of the "pillars" of scientific Socialism, which is a direct untruth?

I shall not, of course, examine how Mr. Mikhailovsky analyses the examples of triads, because, I repeat, this has no connection whatever either with scientific materialism or with Russian Marxism. But the interesting question arises: what grounds had Mr. Mikhailovsky for so distorting the attitude of Marxists to dialectics? Twofold grounds: firstly, Mr. Mikhailovsky heard something, but did not quite grasp what it was all about; secondly, Mr. Mikhailovsky performed another piece of juggling (or, rather, borrowed it from Dühring).

As to the first point, when reading Marxist literature Mr. Mikhailovsky constantly came across references to "the dialectical method" in social science, "dialectical thought," again in the sphere of social problems (which is alone in question) and so forth. In his simplicity of heart (it were well if it were only simplicity) he took it for granted that this method consists in solving all sociological problems in accordance with the laws of the Hegelian triad. If he had been just a little more attentive to the matter in hand he could not but have become convinced of the stupidity of this notion. What Marx and Engels called the dialectical method—in contradistinction to the metaphysical method—is nothing more nor less than the scientific method in sociology, which consists in regarding society as a living organism in a constant state of development (and not as something mechanically concatenated and therefore allowing any arbitrary combination of separate social elements), the study of which requires an objective analysis of the relations of production that constitute the given social formation and an investigation of its laws of functioning and development. We shall endeavour below to illustrate the relation between the dialectical method and the metaphysical method (to which concept the subjective method in sociology undoubtedly belongs) by Mr. Mikhailovsky's own arguments. For the present we shall only observe that anyone who reads the definition and description of the dialectical method given either by Engels (in the polemic against Dühring: *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*) or by Marx (various notes in *Capital* and the Postscript to the second edition; *The Poverty of Philosophy*), will see that the Hegelian triads are not even mentioned, and that it all amounts to regarding social evolution as a natural-historical process of development of economic formations of society. In confirmation of this I shall cite *in extenso* the description of the dialectical method given in the *Vestnik Europy*, 1872, No. 5 (in the article, "The Standpoint of Karl Marx's Critique of Political Economy"), which is quoted by Marx in the Postscript to the second edition

of *Capital*. Marx there says that the method employed in *Capital* has been little understood.

"German reviews, of course, shriek out at 'Hegelian sophistics.'" And in order to illustrate his method more clearly, Marx quotes the description of it given in the article mentioned.

"The one thing which is of moment to Marx," it is there stated, "is to find the law of the phenomena with whose investigation he is concerned.... Of still greater moment to him is the law of their variation, of their development, *i.e.*, of their transition from one form into another, from one series of connections into a different one.... Consequently, Marx only troubles himself about one thing: to show, by precise scientific investigation, the necessity of successive determinate orders of social conditions, and to establish, as fully as possible, the facts that serve him as basis and starting points. For this it is quite enough, if he proves, at the same time, both the necessity of the present order of things, and the necessity of another order into which the first must inevitably pass over—quite irrespective of whether men believe or do not believe it, whether they are conscious or unconscious of it. Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intentions, but rather, on the contrary, determining their will, consciousness and intentions of men. [To be noted by Messieurs the subjectivists, who separate social evolution from the evolution of natural history because man sets himself conscious 'aims' and is guided by definite ideals.] If in the history of civilization the conscious element plays a part so subordinate, then it is self-evident that a critical inquiry whose subject matter is civilization, can, less than anything else, have for its basis any form of, or any result of, consciousness. That is to say, that not the idea, but the outward manifestation alone can serve as its starting point. Such an inquiry will confine itself to the confrontation and the comparison of a fact, not with ideas, but with another fact. For this inquiry, the one thing of moment is, that both facts be investigated as accurately as possible, and that they actually form, each with respect to the other, different momenta of an evolution; but most important of all is the no less accurate analysis of the series of successions, of the sequences and concatenations in which the different stages of such an evolution present themselves. But it will be said, the general laws of economic life are one and the same, no matter whether they are applied to the present or the past. This Marx directly denies.... On the contrary, in his opinion every historical period has laws of its own.... Economic life offers a phenomenon analogous to the history of evolution in other branches of biology.... The old economists misunderstood the nature of economic laws when they likened them to the

laws of physics and chemistry. A more thorough analysis of phenomena shows that social organisms differ among themselves as fundamentally as plants or animals.... Whilst Marx sets himself the task of following and explaining from this point of view the capitalist economic system, he is only formulating, in a strictly scientific manner, the aim that every accurate investigation into economic life must have. The scientific value of such an inquiry lies in the disclosing of the special [historical] laws that regulate the origin, existence, development, and death of a given social organism and its replacement by another and higher one."

Such is the description of the dialectical method which Marx fished out of the bottomless pit of magazine and newspaper comments on *Capital*, and which he translated into German, because this description of the method, as he himself says, is entirely correct. One asks, is there any mention here, even a single word, about triads, trichotomies, the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process and suchlike nonsense, at which Mr. Mikhailovsky tilts in so knightly a fashion? And after giving this description, Marx plainly says that his method is the "direct opposite" of Hegel's method. According to Hegel the development of the idea, in conformity with the dialectical laws of the triad, determines the development of the real world. And it is of course only in that case that one could speak of the importance of the triads and of the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process. "With me, on the contrary," Marx says, "the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected." And the whole matter thus amounts to an "affirmative recognition of the existing state of things" and of its inevitable development. No other role remains for the triads than as a lid and a skin ("I coquetted with the modes of expression" of Hegel, Marx says in this same Postscript), in which only philistines could be interested. How, one now asks, should we judge a man who set out to criticize one of the "pillars" of scientific materialism, *i.e.*, dialectics, and began to speak of anything you like, even of frogs and Napoleon, except of what dialectics is, of whether the development of society is really a process of natural history, whether the materialist conception of economic formations of society as special social organisms is correct, whether the methods of objective analysis of these formations are right, whether social ideas really do not determine social development but are themselves defined by it, and so forth? Can one assume only a lack of understanding in this case?

As to the second point: after such a "criticism" of dialectics, Mr. Mikhailovsky attributes to Marx these methods of proof "by means of" Hegelian triads, and, of course, victoriously combats them.

"Regarding the future," he says, "the immanent laws of society are based purely on dialectics." (This is the exception referred to above.)

Marx's arguments on the subject of the inevitability of the expropriation of the expropriators by virtue of the laws of development of capital-

ism are "purely dialectical." Marx's "ideal" of the common ownership of land and capital "in the sense of its inevitability and unimpeachableness rests entirely on the end of a Hegelian three-term chain."

This argument is *entirely taken* from Dühring, who adduces it in his *Kritische Geschichte der Nationalökonomie und des Sozialismus* (3 *Aufl.*, 1879. S. 486-87).* But Mr. Mikhailovsky says not a word about Dühring. Perhaps the idea of garbling Marx in this way occurred to him independently?

Engels gave a splendid reply to Dühring, and since he also quotes Dühring's criticism we shall confine ourselves to Engels' reply. The reader will see that it fits Mr. Mikhalovsky perfectly.

> " 'This historical sketch (of the genesis of the so-called primitive accumulation of capital in England) is relatively the best part of Marx's book [says Dühring], and would be even better if it had not relied on dialectical crutches to help out its scholarly basis. The Hegelian negation of the negation, in default of anything better and clearer, has in fact to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past. The abolition of individual property, which since the sixteenth century has been effected in the way indicated, is the first negation. It will be followed by a second, which bears the character of a negation of the negation, hence the restoration of "individual property," but in a higher form, based on common ownership of the land and of the instruments of labour. Herr Marx also calls this new "individual property"—"social property," and in this we have the Hegelian higher unity, in which the contradiction is resolved [*aufgehoben*—a specific Hegelian term], that is to say, in the Hegelian verbal jugglery, it is both overcome and preserved.... According to this, the expropriation of the expropriators is as it were the automatic result of historical reality in its material and external relations.... It would be difficult to convince a sensible man of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital on the basis of Hegelian word-juggling such as the negation of the negation.... The nebulous hybrids of Marx's conceptions will however surprise no one who realizes what fantasies can be built up with the Hegelian dialectics as the scientific basis, or rather what absurdities necessarily spring from it. For the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with these artifices, it must be expressly pointed out that Hegel's first negation is the idea of the fall from grace, which is taken from the catechism, and his second is the idea of a higher unity leading to redemption. The logic of facts can hardly be based on this nonsensical analogy borrowed from the religious

* *A Critical History of National Economy and Socialism*, third edition, 1879, pp. 486-87.—*Ed.*

sphere.... Herr Marx remains cheerfully in the nebulous world of his property which is at the same time both individual and social and leaves it to his adepts to solve for themselves this profound dialectical enigma.' Thus far Herr Dühring.

"So [Engels concludes] Marx has no other way of proving the necessity of the social revolution and the establishment of a social system based on the common ownership of land and of the means of production produced by labour, except by appealing to the Hegelian negation of the negation; and because he bases his Socialist theory on these nonsensical analogies borrowed from religion, he arrives at the result that in the society of the future there will be property which is at the same time both individual and social, as the Hegelian higher unity of the sublated contradiction.*

"Let us for the moment leave the negation of the negation to look after itself, and let us have a look at the 'property which is at the same time both individual and social.' Herr Dühring characterizes this as a 'nebulous world,' and curiously enough he is really right on this point. Unfortunately, however, it is not Marx but on the contrary Herr Dühring himself who is in this nebulous world ... he can put Marx right *à la* Hegel, by foisting on him the higher unity of property, of which there is not a word in Marx. [Marx says:]

" 'It is the *negation of negation*. This does not *re-establish private* property for the producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era, *i.e.*, on co-operation of free labourers and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.

" 'The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult, than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialized production, into socialized property.'**

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* That this formulation of Dühring's views perfectly fits Mr. Mikhailovsky too is proved by the following passage in his article "Karl Marx before the Tribunal of Mr. Zhukovsky." Objecting to Mr. Zhukovsky's assertion that Marx is a defender of private property, Mr. Mikhailovsky refers to this scheme of Marx's and explains it in the following manner. "In his scheme Marx performed two well-known tricks of the Hegelian dialectics: firstly, the scheme is constructed in accordance with the laws of the Hegelian triad; secondly, the synthesis is based on the identity of opposites—individual and social property. This means that the word 'individual' here has the specific, purely arbitrary meaning of a term of the dialectical process, and absolutely nothing can be based on it." This was said by a man of the most estimable intentions, defending, in the eyes of the Russian public, the "sanguine" Marx from the bourgeois Mr. Zhukovsky. And with these estimable intentions he explains Marx as basing his conception of the process on "tricks"! Mr. Mikhailovsky may draw from *this the for him not unprofitable moral, that estimable intentions* alone are never quite enough.

** *Capital*, Vol. I, p 837.—*Ed.*

"That is all. The state of things brought about through the expropriation of the expropriators is therefore characterized as the re-establishment of individual property, but 'on the basis' of the social ownership of the land and of the means of production produced by labour itself. To anyone who understands German [and Russian too, Mr. Mikhailovsky, because the translation is absolutely correct] this means that social ownership extends to the land and the other means of production, and private ownership to the products, that is, the articles of consumption. And in order to make this comprehensible even to children of six, Marx assumes on page 56* 'a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community,' that is, a society organized on a Socialist basis; and he says: 'The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and *remains social*. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. *A distribution of this portion among them is consequently necessary*.' And surely that is clear enough even for Herr Dühring....

"The property which is at the same time both private and social, this confused hybrid, this absurdity which necessarily springs from Hegelian dialectics, this nebulous world, this profound dialectical enigma, which Marx leaves his adepts to solve for themselves—is yet another free creation and imagination on the part of Herr Dühring....

"But what role [Engels continues] does the negation of the negation play in Marx? On page 791** and the following pages he sets out the conclusions which he draws from the preceding fifty pages of economic and historical investigation into the so-called primitive accumulation of capital. Before the capitalist era, at least in England, petty industry existed on the basis of the private property of the labourer in his means of production. The so-called primitive accumulation of capital consisted in this case in the expropriation of these immediate producers, that is, in the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. This was possible because the petty industry referred to above is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and primitive bounds, and at a certain stage of its development it brings forth the material agencies for its own annihilation. This annihilation, the transformation of the individual and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, forms the pre-history of capital. As soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own

* *Ibid.*, p. 90.—*Ed.*
** *Ibid.*, p. 834.—*Ed.*

fect. the further socialization of labour and *further transformation* of the land and other means of production [*into capital*], and therefore the further *expropriation* of private proprietors takes a new form.

" 'That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralization of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralization, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economizing of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialized labour.... *Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression,* slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in number, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.'*

"And now I ask the reader: where are the dialectical frills and mazes and intellectual arabesques; where the mixed and misconceived ideas as a result of which everything is all one in the end; where the dialectical miracles for his faithful followers; where the mysterious dialectical rubbish and the contortions based on the Hegelian Logos doctrine, without which Marx, according to Herr Dühring, is quite unable to accomplish his development? Marx merely shows from history, and in this passage states in a summarized form, that just as the former petty industry necessarily, through its own development, created the *conditions* of its annihilation, *i.e.*, of the expropriation of the small proprietors, so *now* the capitalist mode of production has likewise itself created the *material* conditions which will annihilate it. The process is a *historical one*, and if it is at the same time a dialectical process, this is not Marx's *fault*, however annoying it may be for Herr Dühring.

* *Capital*, pp. 836-37.—*Ed.*

"It is only at this point, after Marx has completed his proof on the basis of historical and economic facts, that he proceeds: 'The capitalist mode of production and appropriation, and hence capitalist private property, is the first negation of individual private property founded on the labours of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of the negation'—and so on (as quoted above).

"In characterizing the process as the negation of the negation, therefore, Marx does not dream of attempting to prove by this that the process was historically necessary. On the contrary: after he has proved from history that in fact the process has partially already occurred, and partially must occur in the future, he then also characterizes it as a process which develops in accordance with a definite dialectical law. That is all. It is therefore once again a pure distortion of the facts by Herr Dühring, when he declares that the negation of the negation has to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past, or that Marx wants anyone to allow himself to be convinced of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital ... on the basis of the negation of the negation."*

The reader will see that the whole of Engels' splendid rebuttal of Dühring given here applies in all respects to Mr. Mikhailovsky, who also asserts that with Marx the future rests exclusively on the end of a Hegelian chain and that the conviction of its inevitability can be founded only on faith.**

The whole difference between Dühring and Mr. Mikhailovsky reduces itself to the following two small points: Firstly, Dühring, despite the fact that he cannot speak of Marx without foaming at the mouth, nevertheless considered it necessary to mention in the next section of his *History* that Marx in the Postscript categorically repudiated the accusation of being a Hegelian, whereas Mr. Mikhailovsky remains silent as to this (above quoted) absolutely definite and clear statement by Marx of what he conceives the dialectical method to be.

Secondly, another peculiarity of Mr. Mikhailovsky's is that he concentrated all his attention on the use of tenses. Why, when he speaks of the future, does Marx use the present tense?—our philosopher demands with an air of triumph. The answer to this you will find in any grammar, most

* Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, Eng. ed., Moscow, 1934, pp. 147-52.—*Ed.*

** It would not be superfluous, I think, to note in this connection that this entire explanation is contained in that same chapter in which Engels discusses the seed, the teaching of Rousseau, and other examples of the dialectical process. One would have thought that a mere comparison of these examples with the clear and categorical statements of Engels (and of Marx, who had read the work in manuscript) to the effect that there can be no question of *proving* anything by triads or of inserting in the depiction of the real process the "conditional terms" of these triads, should be quite sufficient to make clear the absurdity of accusing Marxism of Hegelian dialectics.

worthy critic: you will find that the present tense is used in the future when the future is regarded as inevitable and unquestionable. But why so, why is it unquestionable?—Mr. Mikhailovsky anxiously asks, desiring to convey such profound agitation as would justify even a distortion. But on this point, too, Marx gave an absolutely definite reply. *You may consider it inadequate* or wrong, but in that case you must show *how exactly* and *why exactly* it is wrong, and not talk nonsense about Hegelianism.

Time was when Mr. Mikhailovsky not only knew himself what this reply was, but lectured others on it. Mr. Zhukovsky, he wrote in 1877, might with good grounds regard Marx's construction concerning the future as conjectural, but "he had no moral right" to ignore the question of the socialization of labour, "to which Marx attributes vast importance." Well, of course! Zhukovsky in 1877 had no moral right to ignore the question, but Mr. Mikhailovsky in 1894 has this moral right. Perhaps, *quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi?!**

At this point I cannot help recalling an amusing conception of this socialization which was at one time expressed in *Otechestvenniye Zapiski.* In No. 7, 1883, this magazine printed a "Letter to the Editor" from a certain Mr. Postoronny** who, just like Mr. Mikhailovsky, regarded Marx's "construction" about the future as conjectural.

> "Essentially," this gentleman argues, "the social form of labour under capitalism amounts to this, that several hundred or thousand workers grind, hammer, turn, lay on, lay under, pull and perform numerous other operations under one roof. As to the general character of this regime it is excellently expressed by the proverb: 'Each for himself, and God for all.' What is there social about this form of labour?"

Well, you can see at once that the man has grasped what it is all about! "The social form of labour... amounts to ... working under one roof!" And when such preposterous ideas are expressed in one of the best of the Russian magazines, they want to assure us that the theoretical part of *Capital* is generally recognized by science. Yes, as it was unable to adduce any objection to *Capital* of any serious weight, "generally recognized science" began to bow and scrape before it, at the same time continuing to betray the most elementary ignorance and to repeat the old banalities of school economics. We shall have to dwell a little on this question in order to make clear to Mr. Mikhailovsky the real meaning of the matter, which, according to his usual custom, he has entirely ignored.

The socialization of labour by capitalist production does not consist in the fact that people work under one roof (that is only a small part of the process), but in the fact that concentration of capital is accompanied by specialization of social labour, by a reduction in the number of capitalists

* What Jove may do, the bull may not.—*Ed.*

** A pseudonym used by N. K. Mikhailovsky.—*Ed.*

in any given branch of industry and an increase in the number of special branches of industry—in the fact that many scattered processes of production are merged into one social process of production. When, in the days of handicraft weaving, for example, the small producers themselves spun the yarn and made it into cloth, we had only a few branches of industry (spinning and weaving were merged). But when production becomes socialized by capitalism, the number of special branches of industry increases: cotton spinning and cotton weaving are separated; this division and concentration of production in their turn give rise to new branches—machine-building, coal mining, and so forth. In each branch of industry, which has now become more specialized, the number of capitalists steadily decreases. This means that the social tie between the producers becomes increasingly stronger, the producers become welded into a single whole. The isolated small producers each performed several operations at one time, and were therefore relatively independent of each other: if, for instance, a handicraftsman himself sowed flax, and himself spun and wove, he was almost independent of others. It was this (and only this) regime of small, disunited commodity producers that justified the proverb: "Each for himself, and God for all," that is, the anarchy of market fluctuations. But the case is entirely different under the socialization of labour achieved by capitalism. The manufacturer who produces fabrics depends on the cotton yarn manufacturer; the latter on the capitalist planter who grows the cotton, on the owner of the machine-building works, the coal mine, and so on and so forth. The result is that no capitalist can get along without others. It is clear that the proverb "each for himself" is quite inapplicable to such a regime: here each works for all and all for each (and no room is left for God—either as a supermundane fantasy or as a mundane "golden calf"). The character of the regime completely changes. If during the regime of small, isolated enterprises work came to a standstill in any one of them, this affected only a small number of members of society, did not cause any general disturbance, and therefore did not attract general attention and did not provoke social interference. But if work comes to a standstill in a large enterprise, devoted to a highly specialized branch of industry, and therefore working almost for the whole of society and, in its turn, dependent on the whole of society (for the sake of simplicity I take a case where socialization has attained the culminating point), work is bound to come to a standstill in all the other enterprises of society, because they can obtain the necessary products only from this enterprise and can dispose of all their commodities only provided the commodities of this enterprise are available. The whole of production thus becomes fused into a single social process of production; yet each enterprise is conducted by a separate capitalist, is dependent on his will and pleasure and turns over the social products to him as his private property. Is it not clear that the form of production comes into irreconcilable contradiction with the form of appropriation? Is it not evident that the latter is bound to adapt itself to the former and is also bound to become social, that is, Socialist?

But the smart philistine of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* reduces the whole thing to the performance of work under one roof. Could anything be wider of the mark! (I have described only the material process, only the change in the relations of production, without touching on the social aspect of the process, the *amalgamation, welding and organization* of the workers, since that is a derivative and subsidiary phenomenon.)

The reason that such elementary things have to be explained to the Russian "democrats" is that they are immersed to their very ears in middle-class ideas and are positively unable to imagine any but a middle-class order of things.

But let us *return to* Mr. Mikhailovsky. *What objections did he level* against the facts and considerations on which Marx based the conclusion that the Socialist system was inevitable by virtue of the very laws of development of capitalism? Did he show that in reality—under a commodity organization of social economy—there is no growing specialization of the *social process of labour, no concentration of capital and enterprises, no* socialization of the whole labour process? No, he did not cite a single instance in refutation of these facts. Did he shake the proposition that anarchy, which is irreconcilable with the socialization of labour, is an inherent feature of capitalist society? He said nothing about this. Did he prove that *the amalgamation of the labour processes of all the capitalists into a single* social labour process is compatible with private property, or that some solution to the contradiction other than that indicated by Marx is possible or conceivable? No, he did not say a single word about this.

On what then does his criticism rest? On twistings and distortions and *on a spate of words, words that are nothing but noise and wind.*

For, indeed, how else are we to characterize such methods as the critic, having first talked a lot of nonsense about triple successive steps of history, demands of Marx with a serious air: "And what next?"—that is, how will history proceed beyond that final stage of the process which he has described. Please *note that from the very outset of his literary and revolutionary* career Marx most definitely demanded that sociological theory should accurately depict the real process—and nothing more (*cf.*, for instance, *The Communist Manifesto* on the Communists' criterion of theory). He strictly adhered to this demand in his *Capital*: he made *it his task to give a scientific analysis of the capitalist formation of society*—and there he stopped, having shown that the development of this organization actually going on before our eyes has such and such a tendency, that it must inevitably perish and become transformed into another, a higher organization. But Mr. Mikhailovsky, overlooking *the whole meaning of Marx's doctrine, puts his stupid question*: "And what next?" And he adds with an air of profundity: "I must frankly confess that I cannot quite conceive what Engels would reply." But we must frankly confess, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that we can quite conceive the spirit and methods of such "criticism."

Or take the following argument:

> "In the Middle Ages, Marx's individual property based on the proprietor's own labour was neither the only nor the predominating factor, even in the realm of economic relations. There was much more alongside of it, to which, however, the dialectical method in Marx's interpretation [and not in Mr. Mikhailovsky's garbled version of it?] does not propose to return.... It is evident that all these schemes do not present a picture of historical reality, or even of its proportions, but simply satisfy the tendency of the human mind to think of every object in its past, present and future states."

Even your methods of garbling, Mr. Mikhailovsky, are stereotyped to the point of nausea.—First he insinuates into Marx's scheme, which claims to formulate the actual process of development of capitalism,* and nothing else, the intention of proving everything by triads; then he establishes the fact that Marx's scheme does not conform to this plan foisted on it by Mr. Mikhailovsky (the third stage restores only *one* aspect of the first stage, omitting all the others); and then in the coolest manner possible he comes to the conclusion that "the scheme evidently does not present a picture of historical reality"!

Is any serious controversy thinkable with such a man, a man who (as Engels said of Dühring) is incapable of quoting accurately even by way of exception? Is there any arguing, when the public is assured that the scheme "evidently" does not conform to reality, while not even an attempt is made to prove its falsity in any particular?

Instead of criticizing the real contents of Marxist views, Mr. Mikhailovsky exercises his ingenuity on the subject of the categories past, present and future. Arguing against the "eternal truths" of Herr Dühring, Engels, for instance, says that the "morality...preached to us today" is a threefold morality; feudal Christian, bourgeois and proletarian, so that the past, present and future have their own theories of morality. In this connection, Mr. Mikhailovsky reasons as follows:

> "I think that it is the categories past, present and future that lie at the basis of all triple divisions of history into periods."

What profundity! Who does not know that if any social phenomenon is examined in its process of development, there will always be discovered in it relics of the past, the foundations of the present and the germs of the future? But did Engels, for instance, think of asserting that the history of morality (he was speaking, we know, only of the "present") was confined to the three factors indicated, that feudal morality, for example, was not

* Other features of the economic system of the Middle Ages are omitted for the very reason that they belonged to the feudal social formation, whereas Marx investigates only the *capitalist* formation. In its pure form the process of development of capitalism actually did begin—for instance, in England—with the regime of small, isolated commodity producers and their individual labour property.

preceded by slave morality, and the latter by the *morality of the primitive* Communist community? Instead of seriously criticizing Engels' *attempt to* analyse the modern trends of moral ideas by explaining them materialistically, Mr. Mikhailovsky treats us to the most empty phrasemongering.

In connection with the methods of "criticism" Mr. Mikhailovsky resorts to, a criticism which begins with the statement that he does not know where, in what work, the materialist conception of history is expounded, it would perhaps not be unprofitable to recall that there was a time when the author knew one of these works and was capable of appraising it more correctly. In 1877, Mr. Mikhailovsky expressed the following opinion of *Capital*:

> "If we remove from *Capital* the heavy, clumsy and unnecessary lid of Hegelian dialectics [How strange! How is it that "the Hegelian dialectics" was "unnecessary" in 1877, while in 1894 it appears that materialism rests on "the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process"?], we shall observe in it, aside from the other merits of this work, *splendidly digested material for an answer to the general question of the relation of forms to the material conditions of their existence*, and an excellent formulation of this question *for a definite sphere*."

"The relation of forms to the material conditions of their existence"—why, this is precisely that question of the inter-relation of the various aspects of *social life, of the superstructure of ideological social relations resting on material relations, in the answer to which the doctrine of materialism* consists. Let us proceed.

> "In point of fact, *the whole of 'Capital'* [my italics] is devoted to an inquiry into how a social form, once arisen, continues to develop and accentuates its typical features, *subjecting to itself and assimilating discoveries, inventions, improvements in methods of production, new* markets and science itself, compelling them to work for it, and how, finally, the given form is unable to stand any further changes in material conditions."

An astonishing thing! In 1877, "the whole of 'Capital'" was *devoted to a materialist inquiry* into a given social form (what is materialism if not an explanation of social forms by material conditions), whereas in 1894 it turns out that it is not even known where, in what work, an exposition of this materialism is to be sought!

In 1877, *Capital* contained an "inquiry" into how "a given form [the capitalist form, is that not so?] is unable to stand any further changes in material conditions" (mark that!)—whereas in 1894 *it turns out that there* was no inquiry at all, and that *the conviction that the capitalist form is unable to stand any further development* of productive forces—rests "entirely on the end of a Hegelian triad"! In 1877, Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote that "the analysis of the relations of the given social form to the material conditions of its existence will *forever* [my italics] remain a memorial

to the logical force and the vast erudition of the author"—whereas in 1894 he declares that the doctrine of materialism has never and nowhere been verified and proved scientifically!

An astonishing thing! What can this mean? What has happened?

Two things have happened. Firstly, the *Russian* peasant Socialism of the 'seventies—which "snorted" at freedom because of its bourgeois character, which fought the "clear-browed liberals" who zealously glossed over the antagonisms of Russian life, and which dreamed of a peasant revolution— has completely decayed and has begotten that vulgar middle-class liberalism which discerns an "encouraging impression" in the progressive trends of peasant husbandry, forgetting that they are accompanied (and determined) by the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry. Secondly, in 1877 Mr. Mikhailovsky was so engrossed in his task of defending the "sanguine" (*i.e.*, revolutionary Socialist) Marx from the liberal critics that he failed to observe the incompatibility of Marx's method with his own method. But now this irreconcilable antagonism between dialectical materialism and subjective sociology has been explained to him—explained by Engels' articles and books, and by the Russian Social-Democrats (in Plekhanov one frequently meets with very apt comments on Mr. Mikhailovsky)—and Mr. Mikhailovsky, instead of seriously sitting down to reconsider the whole question, has simply taken the bit between his teeth. Instead of welcoming Marx, as he did in 1872 and 1877, he now yelps at him under the guise of dubious praises, and shouts and fumes against the Russian Marxists for not wanting to rest content with "the defence of the economically weak," with warehouses and improvements in the countryside, with museums and artels for kustars and similar well-meaning philistine ideas of progress, and for wanting to remain "sanguine" advocates of a social revolution and to teach, guide and organize the really revolutionary elements of society.

After this brief excursion into the realm of the long-ago, one may, we think, conclude this examination of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism" of Marx's theory. Let us then try to review and summarize the critic's "arguments."

The doctrine he designed to destroy rests, firstly, on the materialist conception of history, and, secondly, on the dialectical method.

As to the first, the critic began by declaring that he does not know where, in what work materialism is expounded. Not having found this exposition anywhere, he began to invent a meaning for materialism himself. In order to give an idea of the excessive claims of this materialism, he invented the story that the materialists claim to have explained the entire past, present and future of mankind—and when it subsequently transpired from a consultation of authentic statements of the Marxists that they regard only one social formation as having been explained, the critic decided that the materialists are narrowing the scope of materialism, whereby, he asserts, they are destroying their own position. In order to give an idea of the methods by which this materialism was worked out, he invented the story

that the materialists themselves confessed to the inadequacy of their knowledge for such a purpose as the working out of scientific Socialism, in spite of the fact that Marx and Engels confessed to the inadequacy of their knowledge (in 1845-46) in relation to economic history in general, and in spite of the fact that they never published the work which testified to this inadequacy of knowledge. After these preludes, we were treated to the criticism itself: *Capital was annihilated by the fact that it deals with only one period, whereas the critic wants to have all periods, and also by the fact that it does not affirm economic materialism, but simply touches upon it*—arguments, evidently, so weighty and cogent as to compel the recognition that materialism had never been scientifically proved. Then the fact was brought against materialism that a man who had absolutely no connection with this doctrine, having studied pre-historic times in an entirely different country, also arrived at materialist conclusions. Further, in order to show that it was absolutely wrong to bring procreation into materialism, that this was nothing but a verbal artifice, the critic set out to prove that economic relations are a superstructure on sexual and family relations. The statements made by our weighty critic in the course of this for the edification of the materialists enriched us with the profound verity that inheritance is impossible without procreation, *that a complex psychology "borders" on the products of this procreation, and that children are brought up in the spirit of their fathers.* In passing, we also learnt that national ties are a continuation and generalization of gentile ties.

Continuing his theoretical researches into materialism, the critic noted that the content of many of the arguments of the Marxists consists in the assertion that oppression and exploitation of the masses are "necessary" under the bourgeois regime and that this regime must "necessarily" become transformed into a Socialist regime—and thereupon he hastened to declare that necessity is too general a parenthesis *(if it is not stated what exactly people consider necessary) and that therefore Marxists are mystics* and metaphysicians. The critic also declared that Marx's polemic against the idealists is "one-sided," but he did not say a word about the relation of the views of these idealists to the subjective method and the relation of Marx's dialectical materialism to these views.

As to the second pillar of Marxism—the dialectical method—one push by the brave critic was enough to cast it to the ground. And the push was very well aimed: *the critic wrought and laboured with incredible zeal to disprove that anything can be proved by triads*, hushing up the fact that the dialectical method does not consist in triads, that it in fact consists in rejecting the methods of idealism and subjectivism in sociology. Another push was specially aimed at Marx: with the help of the valorous Herr Dühring, the critic ascribed to Marx the incredible absurdity of trying to prove the necessity of the doom of capitalism by means of triads—and *then* victoriously combated this absurdity.

Such is the epos of brilliant "victories" of "our well-known sociologist"! How "edifying" (Burenin) is the contemplation of these victories, is it not?

We cannot refrain at this point from touching on another circumstance, one which has no direct bearing on the criticism of Marx's doctrine, but which is extremely significant in elucidating the critic's ideals and his idea of reality, namely, his attitude to the working-class movement in Western Europe.

Above we quoted a statement by Mr. Mikhailovsky in which he says that materialism has not justified itself in "science" (in the science of the German "friends of the people," perhaps?); but this materialism, argues Mr. Mikhailovsky, "is really spreading very rapidly among the working class." How does Mr. Mikhailovsky explain this fact? "As to the success," he says, "which economic materialism enjoys in breadth, so to speak, its widespread acceptance in a critically unverified form, this success chiefly lies, not in science, but in common practice established by prospects in the direction of the future."

What other meaning can there be to this clumsy phrase about practice "established" by prospects in the direction of the future than that materialism is spreading not because it correctly explains reality, but because it turns away from reality in the direction of prospects? And he goes on to say:

> "These prospects demand of the German working class which is adopting them and of those who take a warm interest in its fate neither knowledge nor an effort of critical thought. They demand only faith."

In other words, the wide spread of materialism and scientific Socialism is due to the fact that this doctrine promises the workers a better future! Why, anybody with even a most elementary acquaintance with the history of Socialism and of the working-class movement in the West will see the utter absurdity and falsity of this explanation. Everybody knows that scientific Socialism never painted any prospects for the future as such: it confined itself to analysing the present bourgeois regime, to studying the trends of development of the capitalist social organization—and that is all.

> "We do not say to the world," Marx wrote in 1843, and he fulfilled this program to the letter—"We do not say to the world: 'Cease struggling... your whole struggle is futile.' We provide it with a true slogan for the struggle. We only show the world what it is really struggling for, and realization is a thing which the world *must* acquire, whether it likes it or not."

Everybody knows that *Capital*, for instance—that prime and basic work in which scientific Socialism is expounded—restricts itself to the most general allusions to the future and traces only those already existing elements from which the future system is springing. Everybody knows that as regards

prospects for the future incomparably more was contributed by the earlier Socialists, who described the future society in every detail, desiring to fire mankind with a picture of a system under which people will get along without conflict and under which their social relations will be based not on exploitation but on true principles of progress, conforming to the conditions of human nature. Nevertheless, in spite of a whole phalanx of highly talented people who expounded these ideas, and in spite of the most convinced Socialists, their theories stood aloof from life and their programs from the political movements of the people until large-scale machine industry drew the mass of the working-class proletariat into the vortex of political life, and until the true slogan for their struggle was found. This slogan was found by Marx, not a "utopian, but a strict and, in places, even dry scientist" (as Mr. Mikhailovsky called him in long bygone days—in 1872); and it was not found by virtue of prospects, but of a scientific analysis of the present bourgeois regime, by virtue of an elucidation of the *necessity* of exploitation under this regime, by virtue of an investigation of the laws of its development. Mr. Mikhailovsky, of course, may assure the readers of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* that neither knowledge nor effort of thought is required to understand this analysis, but we have already seen in his own case (and shall see it no less in the case of his Economist collaborator) such a gross lack of understanding of the elementary truths established by this analysis that such a statement, of course, can only provoke a smile. It remains an indisputable fact that the spread and development of the working-class movement are proceeding precisely where large-scale capitalist machine industry is developing, and in proportion to its development, and that the Socialist doctrine is successful only when it stops arguing about the social conditions that harmonize with human nature and sets out to make a materialist analysis of contemporary social relations and to elucidate the necessity of the present regime of exploitation.

Having tried to evade the real reasons for the success of materialism among the workers by describing the attitude of this doctrine to the "prospects," in a way which is directly contrary to the truth, Mr. Mikhailovsky now begins to scoff in the most vulgar and philistine manner at the ideas and tactics of the West European working-class movement. As we have seen, he was unable to bring literally a single argument to bear against Marx's proofs of the inevitability of the transformation of the capitalist system into a Socialist system as a result of the socialization of labour. But without the slightest embarrassment, he ironically remarks that "the army of proletarians" is preparing to expropriate the capitalists, "whereupon all class conflict will cease and peace on earth and good-will among men will reign." He, Mr. Mikhailovsky, knows of far simpler and surer ways of achieving Socialism than this: All that is required is that the "friends of the people" should explain in greater detail the "clear and infallible" ways of achieving "the desired economic evolution"—and then these friends of the people will most likely "be called" to solve the "prac-

tical economic problems" (see the article, "Problems of the Economic Development of Russia," by Mr. Yuzhakov, in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 11), and meanwhile ... meanwhile the workers must wait, rely on the friends of the people and not undertake, with "unjustified self-assurance," an independent struggle against the exploiters. Desiring utterly to demolish this "unjustified self-assurance," our author expresses his fervent disgust with "this science which can almost be contained in a vest-pocket dictionary." How terrible, indeed! Science—and penny Social-Democratic pamphlets that can be put in one's pocket!! Is it not obvious how unjustifiably self-assured are the people who value science only to the extent that it teaches the exploited to wage an independent struggle for their emancipation—teaches them to hold aloof from all "friends of the people" that gloss over class antagonism and desire to take the whole business upon themselves—and who therefore expound this science in penny publications which so shock the philistines? How different it would be if the workers entrusted their destiny to the "friends of the people"! They would give them a real many-tomed, university, philistine science; they would acquaint them with the details of a social organization which is in harmony with human nature, provided only ... the workers consented to wait and did not themselves begin a struggle with such unjustified self-assurance!

* * *

Before passing to the second part of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism," which this time is directed not against Marx's theory in general but against the Russian Social-Democrats in particular, we shall have to make a little digression. The fact of the matter is that just as, when criticizing Marx, Mr. Mikhailovsky not only made no attempt to give an accurate description of Marx's theory but definitely distorted it, so now he most unscrupulously garbles the ideas of the Russian Social-Democrats. The truth must be restored. This can be done most conveniently by comparing the ideas of the earlier Russian Socialists with the ideas of the Social-Democrats. I borrow an account of the former from an article by Mr. Mikhailovsky in *Russkaya Mysl*, 1892, No. 6, in which he also spoke of Marxism (and spoke of it—let it be said to his present shame—in a decent tone, without dealing with questions which can be treated in a censored press only in the Burenin manner, and without confusing the Marxists with all sorts of riff-raff) and, as against Marxism—or, at least, if not against, then parallel with Marxism—set forth his own views. Of course, I have not the least desire to offend either Mr. Mikhailovsky, by reckoning him among the Socialists, or the Russian Socialists, by putting them on a par with Mr. Mikhailovsky; but I think that the *line of argument* is essentially the same in both cases, the difference being only in the degree of firmness, straightforwardness and consistency of their convictions.

Describing the ideas of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote:

> "We have included *the ownership of the land by the tiller* and of the implements of labour by the producer among the moral and political ideals."

The point of departure, you see, is most well-intentioned, inspired with the best wishes....

> "The mediaeval forms of labour* still existing *in our country have* been seriously shaken, but we saw no reason to put a complete end to them for the sake of any doctrine whatever, liberal or *non-liberal.*"

A strange argument! For, "forms of labour" of any kind can be shaken only by replacing them with some other forms; yet we do not find our author (nor any of his co-thinkers for that matter) even attempting to analyse and explain these new forms, or to ascertain why these new forms oust the old forms. Stranger still is the second half of the tirade:

> "We saw no reason to put an end to these forms for the sake of any doctrine."

What means do "we" (*i.e.*, the Socialists—see the above reservation) possess of *"putting an end" to forms of labour, that is, of reconstructing* the existing relations of production of the members of society? Is not the idea that these relations *can be remade in accordance with a doctrine* really absurd? Listen to what comes next:

> "Our task is not to rear at all costs an 'exceptional' civilization from out of our own national depths; but neither is it to transplant to our country the Western civilization *in toto*, with all the contradictions that are rending it; we must take what is good from wherever we can; and whether it happens to be our own or foreign is not a matter of principle, but of practical convenience. Surely, this is so simple, clear and comprehensible that there is *nothing even to discuss.*"

And how simple it all is, indeed! "Take" what is good from everywhere—and there you are! From the mediaeval forms "take" the ownership of the means of production by the worker, and from the new (*i.e.*, the capitalist) forms "take" liberty, equality, enlightenment and culture. And there is nothing even to discuss! Here you have the whole subjective method of sociology in a nutshell: sociology starts with a utopia—the ownership of the land by the worker—and points out the conditions for realizing the desirable, namely, "take" what is good from here and from there. This philosopher regards social relations from a purely metaphysical standpoint, as a simple mechanical aggregation of various institutions, as a simple mechanical concatenation of various phenomena. He plucks out one of these

* "By mediaeval forms of labour"—the author explains in another place—"are *meant not only* communal land ownership, handicraft industry and artel organization. These are undoubtedly all mediaeval forms, but to them must be added all forms of ownership of land or implements of production by the worker."

phenomena—the ownership of the land by the tiller in mediaeval forms—and thinks that it can be transplanted to all other forms, just as a brick can be transferred from one building to another. Yes, but that is not studying social relations; it is mutilating the material to be studied. In reality, there is no such thing as the ownership of the land by the tiller, existing individually and independently, as you have taken it. That was only one of the links in the relations of production of that time, which consisted in the land being divided up among large landed proprietors, landlords, and the landlords allotting it to the peasants in order to exploit them, so that the land was, as it were, wages in kind: it provided the peasant with necessary products, in order that he might be able to produce surplus product for the landlord: it was a fund which secured the landlord the services of the peasant. Why did the author not follow up this system of relations of production, instead of confining himself to plucking out one phenomenon and thus presenting it in an absolutely false light? Because the author does not know how to handle social problems: he (I repeat, I am using Mr. Mikhailovsky's arguments only as an example in order to criticize Russian Socialism *as a whole*) does not even make it his business to *explain* the "forms of labour" of that time and to present them as a definite system of relations of production, as a definite social formation. To use Marx's expression the dialectical method, which obliges us to regard society as a living organism in its functioning and development, is foreign to him.

Without stopping to think why the old forms of labour are ousted by the new forms, he repeats exactly the same error when he discusses these new forms. It is enough for him to note that these forms "shake" the ownership of the land by the tiller—that is, speaking more generally, find expression in the divorcement of the producer from the means of production—and to condemn this for not conforming to the ideal. And here again his argument is utterly absurd: he plucks out one phenomenon (loss of land), without even attempting to represent it as a term of a now different system of relations of production, based on *commodity production*, which necessarily begets competition among the commodity producers, inequality, the impoverishment of some and the enrichment of others. He noted one phenomenon, the impoverishment of the masses, and put aside the other, the enrichment of the minority, and thereby deprived himself of the possibility of comprehending either.

And such methods he calls "seeking answers to the questions of life in their flesh and blood form" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, No. 1), when as a matter of fact quite the contrary is the case: unable and unwilling to explain reality, to look it straight in the face, he ignominiously fled from these questions of life, with its struggle of the haves against the have-nots, to the realm of pious utopias. This he calls "seeking answers to the questions of life in the ideal treatment of their actual burning and complex reality" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 1), when as a matter of fact he did not even attempt to analyse and explain his actual reality.

Instead, he presented us with a utopia *contrived by senselessly plucking* individual elements from various social formations—taking one thing from the mediaeval formation, another from the "new" formation, and so on. *It is obvious that a theory based on this was bound to stand aloof from* actual social evolution, for the simple reason that our utopians had to live and act not under social relations formed from elements taken from here and from there, but under those which determine the relation of the peasant to the kulak (the thrifty muzhik), of the kustar to the dealer, of the worker to the manufacturer, and which they completely failed to comprehend. Their attempts and efforts to remould these uncomprehended relations in accordance with their ideal were bound to end in a fiasco.

Such, in very general outline, was the position of Socialism in Russia when "the Russian Marxists appeared on the scene."

It was precisely with a criticism of the subjective methods of the earlier Socialists that they began. Not satisfied with merely establishing the fact of exploitation and condemning it, they desired to *explain* it. Realizing *that the whole post-Reform history* of Russia consisted in the impoverishment of the mass and the enrichment of a minority, observing the colossal expropriation of the small producers side by side with universal technical progress, noting that these opposite tendencies arose and became accentuated wherever, and to the extent that, commodity production developed and became consolidated, they could not but conclude that they were confronted with a bourgeois (capitalist) organization of social economy, which *necessarily* gave rise to the expropriation and oppression of the masses. Their practical program was quite directly determined by this conviction. This program was to join the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the struggle of the propertyless classes against the propertied, which constitutes the principal content of economic reality in Russia, from the most out-of-the-way village to the most up-to-date and perfected factory. How were they to join it? The answer was again suggested by real life. Capitalism had advanced the principal branches of industry to the stage of large-scale machine industry; by thus socializing production, it had created the material conditions for a new system and had at the same time created a new social force—the class of factory workers, the urban proletariat. Subjected to the same bourgeois exploitation as the exploitation of the whole toiling population of Russia is in its economic essence, this class, however, has been placed, as far as its emancipation is concerned, in rather favourable circumstances: it has no longer any ties with the old society, which was wholly based on exploitation; the very conditions of its labour *and circumstances of life organize it*, compel it to think and enable it to step into the arena of the political struggle. It was only natural that the Social-Democrats should direct all their attention to, and base all their hopes *on this class, that they should* make the development of its class consciousness their program, that they should direct all their activities to-

wards helping it to rise and wage a direct political struggle against the present regime and towards enlisting the whole Russian proletariat in this struggle.

* * *

Let us now see how Mr. Mikhailovsky fights the Social-Democrats. What arguments does he level against their theoretical views, against their political, Socialist activity?

The theoretical views of the Marxists are set forth by the critic in the following manner:

> "The truth [the Marxists are represented as declaring] is that in accordance with the immanent laws of historical necessity Russia will develop her own capitalist production, with all its inherent contradictions and the swallowing up of the small capitalists by the large, and meanwhile the muzhik, divorced from the land, will become transformed into a proletarian, unite, become 'socialized'—and the job will be done —mankind will be happy."

So you see, the Marxists do not differ in any way from the "friends of the people" in their conception of reality; they differ only in their idea of the future: they are not in the least concerned with the present, it appears, but only with "prospects." That this is precisely Mr. Mikhailovsky's idea, of that there can be no doubt: the Marxists, he says, "are fully convinced that there is nothing utopian in their forecasts of the future, and that everything has been weighed and measured in accordance with the strict dictates of science." And, finally, he says, even more explicitly, that the Marxists "believe in and preach the immutability of an abstract historical scheme."

In a word, what we find levelled at the Marxists is that most banal and vulgar allegation to which everybody who has nothing substantial to bring against their views has long resorted.

> "The Marxists preach the immutability of an abstract historical scheme!"

But then, this is a sheer lie and invention!

Nowhere has any Marxist ever argued that there "must be" capitalism in Russia "because" there was capitalism in the West, and so on. No Marxist has ever regarded Marx's theory as a general and compulsory philosophical scheme of history, or as anything more than an explanation of a particular social-economic formation. Only Mr. Mikhailovsky, the subjective philosopher, has managed to betray such a lack of understanding of Marx as to attribute to him a general philosophical theory, in reply to which he received from Marx the quite explicit explanation that he was barking up the wrong tree. No Marxist has ever based his Social-Democratic views on anything but their conformity with the realities and the history of the given, that is, the Russian social and economic relations; and he could not have done so, because this demand on theory has been quite definitely and clearly pro-

claimed and made the cornerstone of the whole doctrine by Marx himself, the founder of "Marxism."

Of course, Mr. Mikhailovsky may refute these statements as much as he pleases on the grounds that he has heard "with his own ears" the preaching of an abstract historical scheme. But what does it matter to us, the Social-Democrats, or to anybody else for that matter, that Mr. Mikhailovsky has had occasion to hear all sorts of absurd nonsense from the people he associates with? Does it not only go to show that he is very fortunate in the choice of the people he associates with, and nothing more? It is very possible, of course, that the witty people with whom the witty philosopher associates call themselves Marxists, Social-Democrats, and so forth—but who does not know that nowadays (as was noted long ago) every adventurer likes to deck himself in a "red"* cloak? And if Mr. Mikhailovsky is so perspicacious that he cannot distinguish these "mummers" from Marxists, or if he has understood Marx so profoundly as never to have noted this criterion of his whole doctrine (the formulation of "what is going on before our eyes") that Marx so emphatically stressed, it only again shows that Mr. Mikhailovsky is not very intelligent, and nothing else.

At any rate, if he undertook to conduct a polemic in the press against the "Social-Democrats," he should have dealt with the group of Socialists who have long borne that name and borne it alone so that no others could be confounded with them, and who have their literary representatives—Plekhanov and his circle. And had he done so—and that obviously is what anybody with any decency should have done—and had consulted at least the first Social-Democratic work, Plekhanov's *Our Differences*, he would have found in its very first pages a categorical declaration made by the author on behalf of all the members of the circle:

"We in no case desire to shelter our program under the authority of a great name" (*i.e.*, the authority of Marx). Do you understand Russian, Mr. Mikhailovsky? Do you understand the difference between preaching abstract schemes and entirely disclaiming the authority of Marx when passing judgment on Russian affairs?

Do you realize that, by presenting the first opinion you happened to hear from the people you associate with as a Marxist opinion, and by ignoring the published declaration of one of the prominent members of Social-Democracy made on behalf of the whole group, you acted dishonestly?

And then the declaration becomes even more explicit:

> "I repeat," Plekhanov says, "that differences of opinion regarding modern Russian realities are possible among the most consistent Marxists . . . [our doctrine] is the first attempt to apply this scientific theory to the analysis of very complex and intricate social relations."

* All this is said on the assumption that Mr. Mikhailovsky did indeed hear abstract historical schemes preached, and has not prevaricated. But I consider it absolutely imperative in this connection to make the reservation that I give this only for what it is worth.

It would seem difficult to say anything more clearly: the Marxists unreservedly borrow from Marx's theory only its invaluable methods, without which an explanation of social relations is impossible, and consequently they consider the criterion of their judgment of these relations to lie in its fidelity and conformity to reality, and not in abstract schemes and suchlike nonsense.

Perhaps you think the author actually meant something else by these statements? But that is not so. The question he was dealing with was—"must Russia pass through the capitalist phase of development?" Therefore the question was not formulated in a Marxist way but in accordance with the subjective methods of sundry native philosophers, for whom the criterion of this "must" lies in the policy of the authorities, or in the activities of "society," or in the ideal of a society which is "in harmony with human nature," and similar nonsense. The question then arises, how would a man who preaches abstract schemes have answered such a question? Obviously, he would have begun to speak of the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process, of the general philosophical importance of Marx's theory, of the inevitability of every country passing through the phase of . . . and so on and so forth.

And how did Plekhanov answer it?

In the only way a Marxist could answer it.

He entirely left aside the question of what must be, considering it an idle one, one that could interest only subjectivists, and spoke only of real social and economic relations and of their real evolution. He therefore did not give a direct answer to this wrongly-formulated question, but instead replied: "Russia *has entered* on the capitalist path."

But Mr. Mikhailovsky, with the air of a connoisseur, talks about the preaching of abstract historical schemes, about the immanent laws of necessity, and similar incredible nonsense. And he calls this "a polemic against the Social-Democrats"!!

If this is a polemicist, then I simply fail to understand what is a windbag?!

One must also observe in connection with Mr. Mikhailovsky's argument quoted above that he represents the views of the Social-Democrats as being that "Russia *will develop* her own capitalist production." Evidently, in the opinion of this philosopher, Russia has not got "her own" capitalist production. The author apparently shares the opinion that Russian capitalism is confined to one and a half million workers. We shall later on again meet with this childish idea of our "friends of the people," who class all the other forms of exploitation of free labour under heaven knows what heading.

> "Russia will develop her own capitalist production with all its inherent contradictions . . . and meanwhile the muzhik divorced from the land, will become transformed into a proletarian."

The deeper the forest, the thicker the trees! So there are no "inherent contradictions" in Russia? Or, to put it plainly, there is no exploitation of

the mass of the people by a handful of capitalists; there is no impoverishment *of the vast majority of the population and no enrichment of a few?* The muzhik has still to be divorced from the land? Why, what is the whole post-Reform history of Russia, if not the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry on a hitherto unparalleled scale? One must possess great courage indeed to say such things publicly. And Mr. Mikhailovsky possesses that courage:

"Marx dealt with a ready-made proletariat and a ready-made capitalism, whereas we have still to create them."

Russia has still to create a proletariat?! In Russia—in which alone can be found such hopeless poverty of the masses and such shameless exploitation of the toilers; which in respect to the condition of her poor has been compared (and legitimately) with England; and in which the starvation of millions of people is a permanent phenomenon existing side by side, for instance, with a steady increase in the export of grain—in Russia there is no proletariat!

I think Mr. Mikhailovsky deserves to have a memorial erected to him in his lifetime for these classic words!*

But we shall see later that this is a constant and consistent tactical manoeuvre of the "friends of the people," namely, pharisaically to close their eyes to the intolerable condition of the toilers in Russia, to depict it as having been only "shaken," so that all that is needed is an effort by "cultured society" and by the government to put everything on the right track. These knights in shining armour think that if they close their eyes to the fact that the condition of the toiling masses is bad not because it has been "shaken," but because these masses are being shamelessly robbed by a handful of exploiters, that if they bury their heads in the sand like ostriches so as not to see these exploiters, the exploiters will disappear. And when the Social-Democrats tell them that it is shameful cowardice to fear to look reality in the face; when they take the fact of exploitation as their starting point and say that its only possible explanation lies in the bourgeois organization of Russian society, which is splitting the people into proletariat and bourgeoisie, and in the class character of the Russian state, which is nothing but the organ of domination of the bourgeoisie, and that therefore *the only way out* lies in *the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie*—these "friends of the people" begin to howl that the Social-Democrats want to deprive the people of their land, that they want to destroy our people's economic organization!

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* But perhaps here too Mr. Mikhailovsky may try to wriggle out of it by declaring that he did not intend to say that there is no proletariat in Russia in general, but only that there is no capitalist proletariat? Is that so? Then why did you not say so? Why, *the whole question* is whether the Russian proletariat is a proletariat characteristic of the bourgeois organization of social economy, or of some other. Who is to blame if in the course of two whole articles you did not say *a word* about this, the only serious and important question, but preferred instead to jabber all sorts of nonsense and to blarney for all you are worth?

We now come to the most outrageous part of this whole indecent, to say the least of it, "polemic," namely, Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism" (?) of the political activities of the Social-Democrats. Everybody realizes that the activities carried on among the workers by Socialists and agitators cannot be honestly discussed in our legal press, and that the only thing a self-respecting censored periodical can do in this connection is to "maintain a tactful silence." Mr. Mikhailovsky has forgotten this most elementary of rules and has not scrupled to take advantage of his monopoly contact with the reading public in order to sling mud at the Socialists.

However, means of combating this unscrupulous critic will be found even if outside of the legal publications.

> "As I understand it," Mr. Mikhailovsky says with assumed naiveté, "the Russian Marxists can be divided into three categories: Marxist observers (who look on but take no part in the process), passive Marxists (they only 'allay the pains of childbirth'; they 'are not interested in the people on the land, and direct their attention and hopes to those who are already divorced from the means of production'), and active Marxists (who bluntly insist on the further ruin of the countryside)."

What is this! Mr. Critic must surely know that the Russian Marxists are Socialists who take the view that the reality around us is a capitalist society, and that there is only one way out of it—the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie? How, then, and on what grounds, does he mix them up so with a sort of senseless vulgarity? What right (moral, of course) has he to extend the term Marxists to people who obviously do not accept the most elementary and fundamental tenets of Marxism, people who have never and nowhere appeared as a distinct group and have never and nowhere proclaimed a program of their own?

Mr. Mikhailovsky has left himself any number of loopholes for justifying such monstrous methods.

> "Perhaps," he says with the smartness and airiness of a society fop, "these are not real Marxists, but they consider and proclaim themselves such."

Where have they proclaimed it, and when? In the liberal and radical salons of St. Petersburg? In private letters? Be it so. Well then, talk to them in your salons and in your correspondence! But you come out publicly anywhere (under the banner of Marxism). And you have the effrontery to claim that you are arguing against "Social-Democrats," although you know that this name is borne only by *one* group of revolutionary Socialists, and that nobody else can be confused with them.*

* I shall dwell on at least one *factual* reference which occurs in Mr. Mikhailovsky's article. Anybody who has read this article will have to admit that he includes Mr. Skvortsov (the author of *The Economic Causes of Starvation*) among the

Mr. Mikhailovsky wriggles and squirms, like a schoolboy caught red-handed: "I am not the least to blame here"—he tries to make the reader believe—"I 'heard it with my own ears and saw it with my own eyes.'" Excellent! *We are quite willing to believe that there is nobody in your field* of vision but vulgarians and rascals. But what has that to do with us, the Social-Democrats? *Who does not know that "at the present time, when" not* only Socialist activity, but all social activity that is at all independent and honest, is subject to political persecution—*for every person actually working* under one banner or another—be it Narodovolism, Marxism, or even, let us say, constitutionalism—there are several score of phrasemongers who under that name conceal their liberal cowardice, and, in addition, perhaps several downright rascals who are arranging their own shady affairs? Is it not obvious that it requires the vilest kind of vulgarity to blame any of these trends for the fact that its banner is being besmirched (privately and on the quiet, at that) by every sort of riff-raff? Mr. Mikhailovsky's whole argument is one chain of distortions, mutilations and perversions. We saw above that he completely distorted the "truths" on which the Social-Democrats base themselves, presenting them in a way in which no Marxist has ever presented *them, or could have presented them, anywhere. And if he had set forth* the actual conception which the Social-Democrats have of Russian realities, he could not but have seen that one can "conform" to these views *only in one manner*, namely, by helping to develop the class consciousness of the proletariat, by organizing and welding it for the political struggle against the present regime. He has, however, one other trick up his sleeve. With an air of injured innocence he pharisaically lifts up his eyes heavenward and unctuously declares:

> "I am very glad to hear that. But I cannot understand what you are protesting against [that is exactly what he says in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2]. Read my comment on passive Marxists more attentively and you will see that I say: from the ethical standpoint, no objection can be made."

This, too, of course, is nothing but a re-hash of his former wretched subterfuges.

Tell us, please, how would the conduct of a person be characterized who declared that he was criticizing social-revolutionary Narodism (when no

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"Marxists." But, as a matter of fact, this gentleman does not call himself a Marxist, and one needs only a most elementary acquaintance with the works of the Social-Democrats to see that from their standpoint he is nothing but a vulgar bourgeois. What sort of a Marxist is he when he does not understand that the social environment for which he projects his progressive measures is a bourgeois environment, and that therefore all "cultural improvements," which are indeed to be observed even in peasant husbandry, are bourgeois progress, improving the position of a minority but proletarianizing the masses! What sort of a Marxist is he when he does not understand that the state to which he appeals with his projects is a class state, capable only of supporting the bourgeoisie and oppressing the proletariat!

other had yet appeared—I take such a period), and who proceeded to say approximately the following:

> "The Narodniks, as I understand it, are divided into three categories: the consistent Narodniks, who completely accept the ideas of the muzhik and, in exact accordance with his desires, would make a general principle of the birch and wife-beating and generally further the abominable policy of the government of the knout and club, which, you know, has been called a *narodnaya** policy; then, the cowardly Narodniks, who are not interested in the opinion of the muzhik, and are only striving to transplant to Russia an alien revolutionary movement by means of associations and suchlike—against which, however, no objection can be made from the ethical standpoint, unless it be the slipperiness of the path, which may easily convert a cowardly Narodnik into a consistent or a courageous one; and, lastly, the courageous Narodniks, who carry out to the full the *narodny* ideals of the thrifty muzhik, and accordingly settle on the land in order to live as kulaks in good earnest."

All decent people, of course, would characterize this as vile and vulgar scoffing. And if, further, the person who said such things could not be rebutted by the Narodniks in the same press; if, moreover, the ideas of these Narodniks had hitherto been set forth only illegally, so that many people had no exact conception of them and might easily believe everything they were told about the Narodniks—then everybody would agree that such a person is....

But perhaps Mr. Mikhailovsky himself has not yet quite forgotten the word that fits here.

* * *

But enough! Many similar insinuations by Mr. Mikhailovsky still remain. But I do not know of any labour more fatiguing, more thankless, more arduous than to have to wallow in this filth, to cull insinuations dispersed here and there, to compare them and to search for at least one serious objection.

Enough!

April 1894

Originally published
as a separate pamphlet in 1894

* *I.e.*, people's.—*Ed.*

THE TASKS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

The second half of the 'nineties is marked by an uncommonly heightened interest in the presentation and solution of problems of the Russian revolution. The appearance of a new revolutionary party, the "Narodnoye Pravo" ("People's Rights"), the growing influence and successes of the Social-Democrats, the evolution of the "Narodnaya Volya" ("People's Will"), all this has evoked a lively discussion on questions of program in Socialist study circles—of intellectuals and of workers—as well as in illegal literature. In connection with the latter, reference should be made to *An Urgent Question,* and the *Manifesto* (1894) of the "Narodnoye Pravo" Party, to the *Leaflet of the "Narodnaya Volya" Group,* to the *Rabotnik* (*The Worker*) published abroad by the "League of Russian Social-Democrats," to the growing activity in the publication of revolutionary pamphlets in Russia, principally for workers, and the agitational activities of the Social-Democratic "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class" in St. Petersburg in connection with the famous St. Petersburg strikes of 1896, etc.

At the present time (the end of 1897), the most urgent question, in our opinion, is the question of the *practical* activities of the Social-Democrats. We emphasize the *practical* side of Social-Democracy, because its theoretical side apparently has already passed the most acute period of stubborn non-comprehension on the part of its opponents, when strong efforts were made to suppress the new trend as soon as it appeared, on the one hand, and the stalwart defence of the principles of Social-Democracy, on the other. Now, *the main and fundamental features* of the theoretical views of the Social-Democrats have been sufficiently clarified. This, however, cannot be said in regard to the *practical* side of Social-Democracy, to its political *program,* its methods of activity, its tactics. It is precisely in this sphere, it seems to us, that variance and mutual misunderstanding prevail most, which prevents complete *rapprochement* with Social-Democracy on the part of those revolutionaries who, in theory, have completely renounced the principles of the "Narodnaya Volya," and, in practice, are either induced by the very force of circumstances to begin to carry on propaganda and agitation among the workers and, even more than that, to organize their work among the workers on the basis of the *class struggle,* or else strive to put *democratic* tasks at the basis of their whole program and *revolutionary activities.* Unless we are mistaken, the latter description applies to the two revolutionary

groups which are operating in Russia at the present time, in addition to the Social-Democrats, *viz.*, the followers of "Narodnaya Volya" and the followers of "Narodnoye Pravo."

We think, therefore, that it is particularly opportune to try to explain the *practical* tasks of the Social-Democrats and to give the reasons why we think that their program is the most rational of the three programs that have been presented, and why we think that the arguments that have been advanced against it are based very largely on a misunderstanding.

The object of the practical activities of the Social-Democrats is, as is well known, to lead the class struggle of the proletariat and to organize that struggle in both its manifestations: Socialist (the struggle against the capitalist class for the purpose of abolishing the class system and organizing Socialist society) and democratic (the fight against absolutism for the purpose of winning political liberty for Russia and the democratization of the political and social system in Russia). We said *"as is well known"* advisedly, for, indeed, from the very first moment it arose as a separate social-revolutionary tendency, Russian Social-Democracy has always definitely stated that this was the object of its activities, has always emphasized the dual character and content of the class struggle of the proletariat and has always insisted on the inseparable connection between its Socialist and democratic tasks—a connection which is strikingly expressed in the name which it has adopted. Nevertheless, to this day, Socialists are often to be encountered who have a most distorted conception of the Social-Democrats and charge them with ignoring the political struggle, etc. We will try, therefore, to describe both sides of the practical activity of Russian Social-Democracy.

We will begin with Socialist activity. One would have thought that the character of Social-Democratic activity in this respect would have become quite clear since the Social-Democratic "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class" in St. Petersburg began its activities among the St. Petersburg workers. The Socialist work of Russian Social-Democrats consists of *propagating* the doctrines of scientific Socialism, of spreading among the workers a proper understanding of the present social and economic system, its foundations and its development, an understanding of the various *classes* in Russian society, of the mutual relations between these classes, the struggle between them, of the role of the working class in this struggle, the attitude of this class towards the declining and developing classes, towards the past and the future of capitalism, of the historical task of international Social-Democracy and of the Russian working class. Inseparably connected with propaganda is *agitation* among the workers, which naturally comes to the forefront in the present political conditions in Russia, and with the present level of development of the masses of workers. Agitating among the workers means that the Social-Democrats take part in all the spontaneous manifestations of the struggle of the working class, in all the conflicts between the workers and the capitalists over the working day, wages, conditions of labour, etc. Our task is to merge our activities with the

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practical everyday questions of working-class life, to help the workers to understand these questions, to draw the attention of the workers to the most important abuses, to help them to formulate their demands to the employers more precisely and practically, to develop among the workers a sense of solidarity, to help them to understand the common interests and the common cause of all the Russian workers as a single class representing part of the international army of the proletariat. To organize study circles for workers, to establish proper and secret connections between these and the central group of Social-Democrats, to publish and distribute literature for workers, to organize correspondence from all centres of the labour movement, to publish agitational leaflets and manifestos and to distribute them, and to train a corps of experienced agitators—such, in the main, are the manifestations of the Socialist activity of Russian Social-Democracy.

Our work is primarily and mainly concentrated on the urban factory workers. The Russian Social-Democrats must not dissipate their forces; they must concentrate their activities among the industrial proletariat, which is most capable of imbibing Social-Democratic ideas, is the most developed class intellectually and politically, and the most important from the point of view of numbers and concentration in the important political centres of the country. Hence, the creation of a durable revolutionary organization among the factory, the urban workers, is one of the first and urgent tasks that confronts the Social-Democrats, and it would be very unwise indeed to allow ourselves to be diverted from this task at the present time. But, while recognizing that it is important to concentrate our forces on the factory workers and decry the dissipation of forces, we do not for a moment suggest that the Russian Social-Democrats should ignore other strata of the Russian proletariat and the working class. Nothing of the kind. The very conditions of life of the Russian factory workers compel them very often to come into very close contact with the handicraftsmen, *i.e.*, the industrial proletariat outside of the factory, who are scattered in the towns and villages and whose conditions are infinitely worse than those of the factory workers. The Russian factory workers also come into direct contact with the rural population (very often the factory worker has his family in the country) and, consequently, cannot but come into contact with the rural proletariat, with the vast mass of professional agricultural labourers and day labourers, and also with those ruined peasants who, while clinging to their miserable plots of land are engaged in working to pay the rent (*otrabotki*) and in casual employment, which is also wage labour. The Russian Social-Democrats think it inopportune to *send* their forces among the handicraftsmen and rural labourers, but they do not intend to leave them uncared for; they will try to enlighten the advanced workers on questions affecting the lives of the handicraftsmen and rural labourers, so that when they come into contact with the more backward strata of the proletariat they will imbue them with the ideas of the class struggle, of Socialism, of the political tasks of Russian democracy in general and of the Russian proletariat in particular. It would

not be practical to send agitators among the handicraftsmen and rural labourers when there is still so much work to be done among the urban factory workers, but in a large number of cases Socialist workers involuntarily come into contact with these rural artisans and they must be able to take advantage of these opportunities and understand the general tasks of Social-Democracy in Russia. Hence, those who accuse the Russian Social-Democrats of being narrow-minded, of trying to ignore the mass of the labouring population and to interest themselves entirely in the factory workers, are profoundly mistaken. On the contrary, agitation among the advanced strata of the proletariat is the surest and only way to rouse (in proportion as the movement expands) the whole of the Russian proletariat. By spreading Socialism and the ideas of the class struggle among the urban workers, we shall inevitably cause these ideas to flow in the smaller and more scattered channels. To achieve this, however, it is necessary that these ideas shall become deep-rooted in better prepared soil, and that this vanguard of the Russian labour movement and of the Russian revolution shall be thoroughly imbued with them. While concentrating its forces among the factory workers, the Russian Social-Democrats are prepared to support those Russian revolutionaries who, in practice, are beginning to base their Socialist work on the class struggle of the proletariat; but they make no attempt to conceal the fact that practical alliances with other factions of revolutionaries cannot and must not lead to compromises or concessions on matters of theory, program or banner. Convinced that the only revolutionary theory that can serve as the banner of the revolutionary movement at the present time is the theory of scientific Socialism and the class struggle, the Russian Social-Democrats will exert every effort to spread this theory, to guard against its false interpretation, and will combat every attempt to bind the young labour movement in Russia with less definite doctrines. Theoretical reasoning proves and the practical activity of the Social-Democrats shows that all *Socialists* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats.*

We will now deal with the *democratic* tasks and with the democratic work of the Social-Democrats. We repeat, once again, that this work is *inseparably* connected with Socialist work. In carrying on *propaganda* among the workers, the Social-Democrats *cannot* ignore political questions and they would regard any attempt to ignore them or even to push them into the background as a profound mistake and a departure from the fundamental principles of international Social-Democracy. Simultaneously with propaganda in favour of scientific Socialism, the Russian Social-Democrats consider it to be their task to carry on propaganda among the working-class masses in favour of *democratic ideas,* to spread an understanding of what absolutism means in all its manifestations, its class content, the necessity for overthrowing it, of the impossibility of waging a successful struggle for the cause of labour without achieving political liberty and the democratization of the political and social system of Russia. In carrying on *agitation* among the workers concerning their immediate *economic* demands, the Social-Demo-

crats link this up with agitation concerning the immediate political needs, grievances and demands of the working class, agitation against the tyranny of the police, which manifests itself in every strike, in every conflict between the workers and the capitalists, agitation against the restriction of the rights of the workers as Russian citizens in general and as the most oppressed and most disfranchised class in particular, agitation against every prominent representative and flunkey of absolutism who comes into direct contact with the workers and who clearly reveals to the working class its state of political slavery. Just as there is not a question affecting the economic life of the workers that cannot be utilized for the purpose of economic agitation, so there is not a political question that cannot serve as a subject for political agitation. These two forms of agitation are inseparably bound up with each other in the activities of the Social-Democrats like the two sides of a medal. Both economic and political agitation are equally necessary for the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat, and economic and political agitation are equally necessary in order to guide the class struggle of the Russian workers, for every class struggle is a political struggle. Both forms of agitation, by awakening class consciousness among the workers, by organizing them and disciplining and training them for united action and for the struggle for the ideals of Social-Democracy, will give the workers the opportunity to test their strength on immediate questions and immediate needs, will enable them to force their enemy to make partial concessions, to improve their economic conditions, will compel the capitalists to reckon with the organized might of the workers, compel the government to give the workers more rights, to give heed to their demands, keep the government in constant fear of the hostile temper of the masses of the workers led by a strong Social-Democratic organization.

We have shown that there is an inseparable connection between *Socialist* and *democratic* propaganda *and* agitation and that revolutionary work in both spheres runs parallel. Nevertheless, there is an important difference between these two forms of activity and struggle. The difference is that, in the economic struggle, the proletariat stands absolutely alone against the landed nobility and the bourgeoisie, except for the help it receives (and then not always) from those elements of the petty bourgeoisie which gravitate towards the proletariat. In the democratic, the *political* struggle, however, the Russian working class does not stand alone; all the political opposition elements, strata of the population, and classes, which are hostile to absolutism and fight against it in one form or another, are taking their place by its side. *Side by side* with the proletariat stand all the opposition elements of the bourgeoisie, or of the educated classes, or of the petty bourgeoisie, or of the nationalities, or religions and sects, etc., etc., which are persecuted by the absolutist government. The question naturally arises, 1) what should be the attitude of the working class towards these elements, and 2) should it not combine with them in the common struggle against absolutism? All Social-Democrats admit that the political revolution in Russia must precede

the Socialist revolution; should they not therefore combine with all the elements in the political opposition to fight against absolutism and put Socialism in the background for the time being? Is not this essential in order to strengthen the fight against absolutism?

We will examine these two questions.

The attitude of the working class, as the fighter against absolutism, toward all the other social classes and groups that are in the political opposition is precisely determined by the fundamental principles of Social-Democracy as expounded in the famous *Communist Manifesto*. The Social-Democrats support the progressive social classes against the reactionary classes, the bourgeoisie against representatives of privileged and feudal landownership and the bureaucracy, the big bourgeoisie against the reactionary strivings of the petty bourgeoisie. This support does not presuppose, and does not require, any compromise with non-Social-Democratic programs and principles—it is support given to an ally against a *particular* enemy. Moreover, the Social-Democrats render this support in order to accelerate the fall of the common enemy; they do not expect anything *for themselves* from these temporary allies, and concede nothing to them. The Social-Democrats support every revolutionary movement against the present social system, they support all oppressed peoples, persecuted religions, oppressed estates, etc., in their fight for equal rights.

Support for all political opposition elements will be expressed in the propaganda of the Social-Democrats by the fact that in showing that absolutism is hostile to the cause of labour, they will show that absolutism is hostile to the various other social groups; they will show that the working class is with these groups on *this or that question, on this or that task,* etc. In their agitation this support will express itself in that the Social-Democrats will take advantage of every manifestation of the police tyranny of absolutism to point out to the workers how this tyranny affects all Russian citizens *generally,* and the representatives of the particularly oppressed estates, nationalities, religions, sects, etc., in particular, and especially how that tyranny affects the *working class.* Finally, in practice, this support is expressed in that the Russian Social-Democrats are prepared to enter into alliance with revolutionaries of other trends for the purpose of achieving certain partial aims, and this preparedness has been proved on more than one occasion.

This brings us to the second question. While pointing out that one or other of the various opposition groups are in unison with the workers, the Social-Democrats will always put the workers in a special category, they will always point out that the alliance is temporary and conditional, they will always emphasize the special class position of the proletariat which to-morrow may be the opponent of its allies of today. We may be told: "this may *weaken* all the fighters of political liberty at the present time." Our reply will be: this will *strengthen* all the fighters for political liberty. Only those fighters are strong who rely on the *appreciation* of the real interests of definite *classes,* and any attempt to obscure these class interests, which already

play a predominant role in modern society, will only serve to weaken the fighters. That is the first point. The second point is that in the struggle against the autocracy the working class must single itself out from the rest, for it *alone* is the truly consistent and unreserved enemy of absolutism, it is *only* between the working class and absolutism that compromise is impossible, *only* in the working class has democracy a champion without reservations, who does not waver, who does not look back. The hostility of all other classes, groups and strata of the population towards the autocracy is *not absolute;* their democracy always looks back. The bourgeoisie cannot but realize that industrial and social development is retarded by absolutism, but it fears the complete democratization of the political and social system and may at any time enter into alliance with absolutism against the proletariat. The petty bourgeoisie is two-faced by its very nature; on the one hand it gravitates towards the proletariat and democracy; on the other hand it gravitates towards the reactionary classes, tries to hold up the march of history, is likely to be caught by the experiments and flirtations of absolutism (for example, the "people's politics" of Alexander III), is likely to conclude an alliance with the ruling classes against the proletariat *in order* to strengthen its own position as a class of *small property owners.* Educated people, and the "intelligentsia" generally, cannot but rise against the savage police tyranny of absolutism, which persecutes thought and knowledge; but the material interests of this intelligentsia tie it to absolutism and the bourgeoisie, compel it to be inconsistent, to enter into compromises, to sell its oppositional and revolutionary fervour for an official job, or a share in profits and dividends. As for the democratic elements among the oppressed nationalities and the persecuted religions, everybody knows and sees that the class antagonisms within these categories of the population are much more profound and powerful than is the solidarity among all classes in these categories against absolutism and for democratic institutions. The proletariat alone can be—and because of its class position cannot but be—consistently democratic, the determined enemy of absolutism, incapable of making any concessions, or of entering into any compromises. The proletariat alone can act as the *vanguard* in the fight for political liberty and for democratic institutions, firstly, because political tyranny affects the proletariat most; for there is nothing in the position of that class that can in any way ameliorate this tyranny; it has no access to the higher authorities, not even to the officials; it has no influence on public opinion. Secondly, the proletariat alone is capable of bringing about the *complete* democratization of the political and social system, because such democratization would place the system in the hands of the workers. That is why the *merging* of the democratic activities of the working class with the democratic aspirations of the other classes and groups would *weaken* the forces of the democratic movement, would *weaken* the political struggle, would make it less determined, less consistent, more likely to compromise. On the other hand, if the working class is *singled out* as the vanguard in the fight for democratic institu-

tions, it will *strengthen* the democratic movement, will *strengthen* the struggle for political liberty, for the working class will *stimulate* all the other democratic and political opposition elements, will push the liberals towards the political radicals, it will push the radicals towards an irrevocable rupture with the whole of the political and social structure of present society. We said above that all *Socialists* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats*. We will now add: all true and consistent *democrats* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats*.

To illustrate what we mean we will quote the following example. Take the civil service officials, the bureaucracy, as representing a class of persons who specialize in administrative work and occupy a privileged position compared with the people. Everywhere, from autocratic and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured, free and civilized England, we see this institution, representing an essential organ of bourgeois society. Fully corresponding to the backwardness of Russia and its absolute monarchy are the *complete lack of rights* of the people before the officials, and the *complete* absence of control over the privileged bureaucracy. In England there is powerful popular control over the administration, but even there that control is *far from being complete*, even there the bureaucracy has managed to retain not a few of its privileges, is not infrequently the master and not the servant of the people. Even in England we see that powerful social groups support the privileged position of the bureaucracy and hinder the complete democratization of this institution. Why? Because it is in the interests of the proletariat alone to *completely* democratize it; the most progressive strata of the bourgeoisie defend certain of the prerogatives of the bureaucracy, protest against the election of all officials, against the complete abolition of the property qualifications, against making officials directly responsible to the people, etc., because these strata realize that the proletariat will take advantage of complete democratization in order to use it *against* the bourgeoisie. This is the case also in Russia. Numerous and varied strata of the Russian people are opposed to the omnipotent, irresponsible, corrupt, savage, ignorant and parasitic Russian bureaucracy, but, except for the proletariat, not *one* of these strata would agree to the complete democratization of the bureaucracy, because all these strata (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, the "intelligentsia" generally) have some connections with the bureaucracy, because all these strata are *kith and kin* of the Russian bureaucracy. Everyone knows how easy it is in Holy Russia for a radical intellectual or Socialist intellectual to become transformed into a civil servant of the Imperial Government, a civil servant who salves his conscience with the thought that he will "do good" within the limits of office routine, a bureaucrat who pleads this "good" in justification of his political indifference, his servility towards the government of the knout and *nagaika*. The *proletariat* alone is unreservedly hostile towards absolutism and to the Russian bureaucracy, the *proletariat* alone has no *connections* with these organs of aristocratic-bourgeois

society, the proletariat alone is capable of entertaining irreconcilable hostility towards and of waging a determined struggle against it.

In advancing our argument that the proletariat, led in its class struggle by Social-Democracy, is the vanguard of Russian democracy, we encounter the very widespread and very strange opinion that Russian Social-Democracy puts political questions and the political struggle in the background. As we see, this opinion is the very opposite of the truth. How is this astonishing failure to understand the principles of Social-Democracy, which have been so often enunciated and which were enunciated in the very first Russian Social-Democratic publications, in the pamphlets and books published abroad by the "Emancipation of Labour" group, to be explained? In our opinion, this astonishing fact is to be explained by the following three circumstances:

First, the general failure of the representatives of old revolutionary theories to understand the principles of Social-Democracy because they are accustomed to build up their programs and plans of activity on the basis of abstract ideas and not on the basis of an exact calculation of the real classes operating in the country and placed by history in certain relationships. It is precisely the lack of such a realistic discussion of the *interests* that support Russian democracy that could give rise to the opinion that Russian Social-Democracy leaves the democratic tasks of the Russian revolutionaries in the shade.

Second, the failure to understand that by uniting economic and political questions and Socialist and democratic activities into one whole, into the single *class struggle of the proletariat*, the democratic movement and the political struggle are not weakened, but strengthened, that it is brought closer to the real interests of the masses of the people; for political questions are thereby dragged out of the "stuffy studies of the intelligentsia" into the street, among the workers and labouring classes; the abstract ideas of political oppression are thereby translated into the real manifestations of this oppression from which the proletariat suffers most of all, and on the basis of which the Social-Democrats carry on their agitation. Very often it seems to the Russian radical that instead of calling upon the advanced workers to join the political struggle, the Social-Democrat points to the task of developing the labour movement, of organizing the class struggle and thereby *retreats* from democracy, pushes the political struggle into the background. If this is *retreat* it is the kind of retreat that is meant in the French proverb: *Il faut reculer pour mieux sauter!**

Third, this misunderstanding arose from the fact that the very term "political struggle" means something different to the followers of "Narodnaya Volya" and "Narodnoye Pravo" from what it means to the Social-Democrat. The Social-Democrats conceive the political struggle differently from the way it is conceived by the representatives of the old revolutionary theories;

* Retreat in order to leap further forward.

their conception of it is *much broader*. A striking illustration of this seeming paradox is provided by *Narodnaya Volya Leaflet*, No. 4, Dec. 9, 1895. While heartily welcoming this publication, which testifies to the profound and fruitful thinking that is going on among the modern followers of "Narodnaya Volya," we cannot refrain from mentioning P. L. Lavrov's article, *Program Questions* (pp. 19-22), which strikingly reveals another conception of the political struggle entertained by the old-style followers of "Narodnaya Volya."* "Here," writes P. L. Lavrov, speaking of the relations between the "Narodnaya Volya" program and the Social-Democratic program, "one thing and one thing alone is material, *viz.*, is it possible to organize a strong workers' party under absolutism apart from a revolutionary party which is directed against absolutism?" (p. 21, col. 2); also a little before that (in col. 1): "...to organize a Russian Workers' Party under the reign of absolutism without at the same time organizing a revolutionary party against this absolutism." We totally fail to understand these distinctions which seem to be of such cardinal importance to P. L. Lavrov. What? A "Workers' Party *apart from* a revolutionary party which is directed against absolutism?" But is not a workers' party a revolutionary party? Is it not directed against absolutism? This queer argument is explained in the following passage in P. L. Lavrov's article: "A Russian Workers' Party will have to be organized under the conditions of absolutism with all its charms. If the Social-Democrats succeed in doing this without at the same time organizing a political *conspiracy*** against absolutism, with all the conditions of such a *conspiracy*,** then, of course, their political program would be a fit and proper program for Russian Socialists; for the emancipation of the workers by the efforts of the workers themselves would then be achieved. But this is very doubtful, if not impossible." (P. 21, col. 1.) That is the whole point! To the followers of "Narodnaya Volya," the term, political struggle, is synonymous with political *conspiracy*! It must be confessed that in these words P. L. Lavrov has managed to display in striking relief the fundamental difference between the tactics in political struggle adopted by the followers of "Narodnaya Volya" and those adopted by the Social-Democrats. The traditions of Blanquism, of conspiracies, are very strong among the followers of "Narodnaya Volya," so much so that they cannot conceive the political struggle except in the form of political conspiracy. The Social-Democrats do not hold to such a narrow point of view; they do not believe in conspiracies; they think that the period of conspiracies has long passed away, that to reduce the political struggle to a conspiracy means to restrict its scope greatly, on the

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* P. L. Lavrov's article in No. 4 is, in fact, only an "excerpt" from a long letter written by him for *Materials*. We have heard that this letter was published abroad in full this summer (1897) as well as a reply by Plekhanov. We have seen neither the one nor the other. Nor do we know whether *Narodnaya Volya Leaflet* No. 5, in which the editors promised to publish an editorial article on P. L. Lavrov's letter, has been published yet. *Cf.* No. 4, p. 22, col. 1, footnote.

** Our italics.

and of the development of Russian society, on the fundamental questions of the conception of history, may seem to be only matters of "detail"! Long ago it was said that without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement, and it is hardly necessary to prove this truth at the *present time*. The theory of the class struggle, the materialist conception of Russian history and the materialist appreciation of the present economic and political situation in Russia, the recognition of the necessity to reduce the revolutionary struggle to the definite interests of a definite class and to analyse its relation to other classes—to describe these great revolutionary questions as "details" is so utterly wrong and comes so unexpectedly from a veteran of revolutionary *theory* that we are almost prepared to regard this passage as a *lapsus*.* As for the first part of the tirade quoted above, its unfairness is still more astonishing. To state in print that the Russian Social-Democrats only group the forces of labour for the purpose of fighting against capital (*i.e.*, only for the economic struggle!) and that they do not rally revolutionary individuals and groups for the struggle against absolutism implies either that the one who makes such a statement does not know the generally known facts about the activities of the Russian Social-Democrats or that he does not want to know them. Or perhaps P. L. Lavrov does not regard the Social-Democrats who are carrying on practical work in Russia as "revolutionary individuals" and "revolutionary groups"?! Or (and this, perhaps, is more likely) when he says, "struggle" against absolutism, does he mean only hatching plots against absolutism? (*Cf.* p. 21, col. 2: "... it is a matter of ... organizing a revolutionary *plot*," our italics.) Perhaps, in P. L. Lavrov's opinion, those who do not engage in political plotting are not engaged in the political struggle? We repeat once again: opinions like these fully correspond to the ancient traditions of ancient "Narodnaya Volya"-ism, but they certainly do not correspond either to modern conceptions of the political struggle or to present-day conditions.

We have still to say a few words about the followers of "Narodnoye Pravo." P. L. Lavrov is quite right, in our opinion, when he says that the Social-Democrats "recommend the 'Narodnoye Pravo'-ites as being more frank," and that they are "prepared to support them without, however, merging with them" (p. 19, col. 2); he should have added however: as franker *democrats*, and *to the extent that* the "Narodnoye Pravo"-ites come out as consistent democrats. Unfortunately, this condition is more in the nature of the desired future than the actual present. The "Narodnoye Pravo"-ites expressed a desire to free the tasks of democracy from Narodism and from the obsolete forms of "Russian Socialism" generally; but they themselves have not yet been freed from old prejudices by a long way; and they proved to be far from consistent when they described their party, which is exclusively a Party for political reforms, as a "social [??!] revolutionary" party (*cf.* their Manifesto dated February 19, 1894), and declared in their manifesto

* A slip.—*Ed.*

that the term "people's rights" implies also the organization of "people's industry" (we are obliged to quote from memory) and thus introduced, on the sly, Narodnik prejudices. Hence, P. L. Lavrov was not altogether wrong when he described them as "masquerade politicians." (P. 20, col. 2.) But perhaps it would be fairer to regard "Narodnoye Pravo"-ism as a transitional doctrine, to the credit of which it must be said that it was ashamed of the native Narodnik doctrines and openly entered into polemics against those abominable Narodnik reactionaries who, in the face of the police-ridden class government of the autocracy, have the impudence to speak of economic, and not political, reforms being desirable. (*Cf. An Urgent Question*, published by the "Narodnoye Pravo" Party.) If, indeed, the "Narodnoye Pravo" Party does not contain anybody except ex-Socialists who conceal their Socialist banner on the plea of tactical considerations, and who merely don the mask of non-Socialist politicians (as P. L. Lavrov assumes, p. 20, col. 2)—then, of course, that party has no future whatever. If, however, there are in the party not masquerade, but real non-Socialist politicians, non-Socialist democrats, then this party can do not a little good by striving to draw closer to the political opposition elements among our bourgeoisie, striving to arouse political consciousness among our petty bourgeoisie, small shopkeepers, small artisans, etc.—the class which, everywhere in Western Europe, played a part in the democratic movement and which, in Russia, has made particularly rapid progress in cultural and other respects in the post-Reform epoch, and which cannot avoid feeling the oppression of the police government and its cynical support of the big factory owners, the financial and industrial monopolist magnates. All that is required is that the "Narodnoye Pravo"-ites make it their task to draw closer to various strata of the population and not confine themselves to the "intelligentsia" whose impotence, owing to their isolation from the real interests of the masses, is even admitted in *An Urgent Question*. For this it is necessary that the "Narodnoye Pravo"-ites abandon all aspirations to merge heterogeneous social elements and to eliminate Socialism from political tasks, that they abandon that false pride which prevents them from drawing closer to the bourgeois strata of the population, *i.e.*, that they not only talk about a program for non-Socialist politicians, but act in accordance with such a program, that they rouse and develop the class consciousness of those social groups and classes for whom Socialism is quite unnecessary, but who, as time goes on, more and more feel the oppression of absolutism and realize the necessity for political liberty.

* * *

Russian Social-Democracy is still very young. It is but just emerging from its embryonic state in which theoretical questions predominated. It is but just beginning to develop its practical activity. Instead of criticizing the Social-Democratic theory and program, revolutionaries in other factions must of necessity criticize the *practical activities* of the Russian Social-

Democrats. And it must be admitted that the criticism of the practical activities differs very sharply from the criticism of theory, so much so, in fact, that the comical rumour went round that the St. Petersburg "League of Struggle" is not a Social-Democratic organization. The very fact that such a rumour could be floated shows how unfounded is the charge, that is being bandied about, that the Social-Democrats ignore the political struggle. The very fact that such a rumour could be floated shows that many revolutionaries who could not be convinced by the *theory* held by the Social-Democrats are beginning to be convinced by their practice.

Russian Social-Democracy has still an enormous field of work open before it that has hardly been touched yet. The awakening of the Russian working class, its spontaneous striving after knowledge, unity, Socialism, for the struggle against its exploiters and oppressors, become more strikingly revealed every day. The enormous success which Russian capitalism has achieved in recent times serves as a guarantee that the labour movement will grow uninterruptedly in breadth and depth. Apparently, we are now passing through the period in the capitalist cycle when industry is "flourishing," when business is brisk, when the factories are working to full capacity and when new factories, new enterprises, new joint-stock companies, railway enterprises, etc., etc., spring up like mushrooms. But one need not be a prophet to be able to foretell the inevitable crash (more or less sudden) that must succeed this period of industrial "prosperity." This crash will cause the ruin of masses of small masters, will throw masses of workers into the ranks of the unemployed, and will thus confront all the masses of the workers in an acute form with the questions of Socialism and democracy which have already confronted every class-conscious and thinking worker. The Russian Social-Democrats must see to it that when the crash comes the Russian proletariat is more class conscious, more united, able to understand the tasks of the Russian working class, capable of putting up resistance against the capitalist class—which is now reaping a rich harvest of profits and which always strives to throw the burden of the losses upon the workers—and capable of taking the lead of Russian democracy in the resolute struggle against the police absolutism which fetters the Russian workers and the whole of the Russian people.

And so, to work, comrades! Let us not lose precious time! The Russian Social-Democrats have much to do to meet the requirements of the awakening proletariat, to organize the labour movement, to strengthen the revolutionary groups and their contacts with each other, to supply the workers with propaganda and agitational literature, and to unite the workers' circles and Social-Democratic groups scattered all over Russia into a single *Social-Democratic Labour Party*!

Originally published
as a separate pamphlet
in Geneva, 1898

THE FORMATION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

APPEARANCE OF THE BOLSHEVIK AND THE MENSHEVIK GROUPS WITHIN THE PARTY

10—95

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Burning Questions of Our Movement

"... Party struggles lend a party strength and vitality; the best proof of the weakness of a party is the diffuseness and the blurring of clearly defined boundaries, a party becomes stronger by purging itself. . . ."

(From a letter by Lassalle to Marx, June 24, 1852.)

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

According to the author's original plan, the present pamphlet was to have been devoted to a detailed development of the ideas expressed in the article "Where To Begin?" (*Iskra, No. 4, May 1901.*)* And we must first of all apologize to the reader for the delay in fulfilling the promise made in that article (and repeated in replies to many private inquiries and letters). One of the reasons for this delay was the attempt made last June (1901) to unite all the Social-Democratic organizations abroad. It was natural to wait for the results of this attempt, for if it were successful it would perhaps have been necessary to expound *Iskra's* views on organization from a rather different point of view; and in any case, such a success promised to put a very early end to the existence of two separate trends in the Russian Social-Democratic movement. As the reader knows, the attempt failed, and, as we shall try to show herein, was bound to fail after the new swing of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, in its issue No. 10, towards Economism. It proved absolutely essential to commence a determined fight against this diffuse and ill-defined, but very persistent trend, which might spring up again in diverse forms. Accordingly, the original plan of the pamphlet was changed and very considerably enlarged.

Its main theme was to have been the three questions raised in the article "Where To Begin?"—*viz.*, the character and substance of our political agi-

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* See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II, pp. 15-23.—*Ed.*

tation, our organizational tasks, and the plan for building, simultaneously and from various ends, a militant, country-wide organization. These questions have long engaged the mind of the author, who already tried to raise them in *Rabochaya Gazeta** during one of the unsuccessful attempts to revive that paper (see Chap. V). But the original plan to confine this pamphlet to an analysis of these three questions and to express our views as far as possible in a positive form, without entering at all, or entering very little, into polemics, proved quite impracticable for two reasons. One was that Economism proved to be much more tenacious than we had supposed (we employ the term Economism in the broad sense, as explained in *Iskra*, No. 12 [December 1901], in an article entitled "A Conversation with the Advocates of Economism," which was a synopsis, so to speak, of the present pamphlet.**) It became clear beyond doubt that the differences regarding *the answers to these three questions were due much more to the fundamental* antithesis between the two trends in the Russian Social-Democratic movement than to differences over details. The second reason was that the perplexity displayed by the Economists over the practical application of our views in *Iskra* revealed quite clearly that we often literally speak in different languages, that therefore we *cannot* come to any understanding without beginning *ab ovo*,*** and that an attempt must be made, in the simplest possible style, and illustrated by numerous and concrete examples, *systematically* to "*clear up all*" our fundamental points of difference with *all* the Economists. I resolved to make such an attempt to "clear up" the differences, fully realizing that it would greatly increase the size of the pamphlet and delay its publication, but at the same time seeing *no other way* of fulfilling the promise I made in the article "Where To Begin?" Thus, in addition to apologizing for the belated publication of the pamphlet, I must *apologize* for its numerous literary shortcomings. I had to work under *great pressure, and was moreover frequently interrupted by other work.*

The examination of the three questions mentioned above still constitutes the main theme of this pamphlet, but I found it necessary to begin with two questions of a more general nature, *viz.*, why an "innocent" and "natural" demand like "freedom of criticism" should be a real fighting challenge for us, and why we cannot agree even on the fundamental question of the role of Social-Democrats in relation to the spontaneous mass movement. Further, the exposition of our views on the character and substance of political agitation developed into an explanation of the difference between the trade unionist policy and the Social-Democratic policy, while the exposition of

* *Rabochaya Gazeta*—organ of the Kiev Social-Democrats. By decision of the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. this newspaper was declared the central organ of the Party. Lenin wrote several articles for the paper (see Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. II, pp. 487-504) but it proved impossible to renew publication.—*Ed.*

** See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV, Book II, pp. 65-71.—*Ed.*

*** *Ab ovo*—from the beginning.—*Ed.*

our views on organizational tasks developed into an explanation of the difference between the amateurish methods which satisfy the Economists and the organization of revolutionaries which in our opinion is indispensable. Further, I advance the "plan" for an all-Russian political newspaper with all the more insistence because of the flimsiness of the arguments levelled against it, and because no real answer has been given to the question I raised in the article "Where To Begin?" as to how we can set to work from all sides simultaneously to construct the organization we need. Finally, in the concluding part of this pamphlet, I hope to show that we did all we could to prevent a decisive rupture with the Economists, but that it nevertheless proved inevitable; that *Rabocheye Dyelo* has acquired a special significance, a "historical" significance, if you will, because it most fully and most graphically expressed, not consistent Economism, but the confusion and vacillation which constitute the distinguishing feature of a *whole period* in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement; and that therefore the controversy with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which may at first sight seem to be waged in too excessive detail, also acquires significance; for no progress can be made until we put a definite end to this period.

February 1902

V. ILYIN

I

DOGMATISM AND "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"

A. What Is "Freedom of Criticism"?

"Freedom of criticism," this undoubtedly is the most fashionable slogan at the present time, and the one most frequently employed in the controversies between the Socialists and democrats of all countries. At first sight, nothing would appear to be more strange than the solemn appeals by one of the parties to the dispute for freedom of criticism. Have voices been raised in some of the advanced parties against the constitutional law of the majority of European countries which guarantees freedom to science and scientific investigation? "Something must be wrong here," an onlooker, who has not yet fully appreciated the nature of the disagreements among the controversialists, will say when he hears this fashionable slogan repeated at every cross-road. "Evidently this slogan is one of the conventional phrases which, like a nickname, becomes legitimatized by use, and becomes almost an appellative," he will conclude.

In fact, it is no secret that two separate tendencies have been formed in present-day international Social-Democracy.* The fight between these tendencies now flares up in a bright flame, and now dies down and smoulders under the ashes of imposing "resolutions for an armistice." What this "new" tendency, which adopts a "critical" attitude towards "obsolete doctrinaire" Marxism, represents has been *stated* with sufficient precision by Bernstein, and *demonstrated* by Millerand.

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* Incidentally, this perhaps is the only occasion in the history of modern Socialism in which controversies between various tendencies within the Socialist movement have grown from national into international controversies; and this is extremely encouraging. Formerly, the disputes between the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers, between the Guesdites and the Possibilists, between the Fabians and the Social-Democrats, and between the "Narodnaya Volya"-ites and Social-Democrats, remained purely national disputes, reflected purely national features and proceeded, as it were, on different planes. At the present time (this is quite evident now), the English Fabians, the French Ministerialists, the German Bernsteinites and the Russian "critics"—all belong to the same family, all extol each other, learn from each other, and are rallying their forces against "doctrinaire" Marxism. Perhaps in this first really international battle with Socialist opportunism, international revolutionary Social-Democracy will become sufficiently strengthened to put an end to the political reaction that has long reigned in Europe.

Social-Democracy must change from a party of the social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms. Bernstein has surrounded this political demand with a whole battery of symmetrically arranged "new" arguments and reasonings. The possibility of putting Socialism on a scientific basis and of proving that it is necessary and inevitable from the point of view of the materialist conception of history was denied, as also were the facts of growing impoverishment and proletarianization and the intensification of capitalist contradictions. The very conception, "*ultimate aim,*" was declared to be unsound, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat was absolutely rejected. It was denied that there is any difference in principle between liberalism and Socialism. *The theory of the class struggle* was rejected on the grounds that it could not be applied to a strictly democratic society, governed according to the will of the majority, etc.

Thus, the demand for a definite change from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois social-reformism was accompanied by a no less definite turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism. As this criticism of Marxism has been going on for a long time now, from the political platform, from university chairs, in numerous pamphlets and in a number of scientific works, as the younger generation of the educated classes has been systematically trained for decades on this criticism, it is not surprising that the "new, critical" tendency in Social-Democracy should spring up, all complete, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. The content of this new tendency did not have to grow and develop, it was transferred bodily from bourgeois literature to Socialist literature.

To proceed. If Bernstein's theoretical criticism and political yearnings are still obscure to anyone, the French have taken the trouble to demonstrate the "new method." In this instance, also, France has justified its old reputation as the country in which "more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision...." (Engels, in his introduction to Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire.*) The French Socialists have begun, not to theorize, but to act. The more developed democratic political conditions in France have permitted them to put "Bernsteinism into practice" immediately, with all its consequences. Millerand has provided an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism; not without reason did Bernstein and Vollmar rush so zealously to defend and praise him! Indeed, if Social-Democracy, in essence, is merely a reformist party, and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then not only has a Socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, it is even his duty always to strive to do so. If democracy, in essence, means the abolition of class domination, then why should not a Socialist minister charm the whole bourgeois world by orations on class collaboration? Why should he not remain in the cabinet even after the shooting down of workers by gendarmes has exposed, for the hundredth and thousandth time, the real nature of the democratic co-operation of classes? ... And the reward for this utter humiliation and self-degradation of Socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the

Socialist consciousness of the working class—the only basis that can guarantee our victory—the reward for this is imposing *plans* for niggardly reforms, *so niggardly in fact that much more has been obtained from* bourgeois governments!

He who does not deliberately close his eyes cannot fail to see that the new "critical" tendency in Socialism is nothing more nor less than a new species of *opportunism.* And if we judge people not by the brilliant *uniforms they* deck themselves in, not by the imposing appellations they give themselves, but by their actions, and by what they actually advocate, it will be clear *that* "freedom of criticism" means freedom for an opportunistic tendency in Social-Democracy, the freedom to convert Social-Democracy into a democratic reformist party, the freedom to introduce bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into Socialism.

"Freedom" is a grand word, but under the banner of *free trade* the most predatory wars were conducted; under the banner of free labour, the toilers were robbed. The modern use of the term "freedom of criticism" contains *the same inherent falsehood. Those who are really convinced that they have* advanced science would demand, not freedom for the new views to continue side by side with the old, but the substitution of the new views for the old. The cry "Long live freedom of criticism," that is heard today, too strongly calls to mind the fable of the empty barrel.

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and are under their almost constant fire. We have combined voluntarily, precisely for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not to retreat into the adjacent marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very *outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive* group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of *conciliation. And now several among us begin to cry out: let us go into* this marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: how conservative you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the right to invite you to take a better road! Oh, yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render *you* every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word "freedom"; for we too are "free" to go where we please, free not only to fight against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh.

B. The New Advocates of "Freedom of Criticism"

Now, this slogan ("freedom of criticism") is solemnly advanced in No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo,* the organ of the Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats abroad, not as a theoretical postulate, but as a political demand, as a reply to the question: "is it possible to unite the Social-Democratic

organizations operating abroad?"—"in order that unity may be durable, there must be freedom of criticism." (P. 36.)

From this statement two very definite conclusions must be drawn: 1) that *Rabocheye Dyelo* has taken the opportunist tendency in international Social-Democracy under its wing; and 2) that *Rabocheye Dyelo* demands freedom for opportunism in Russian Social-Democracy. We shall examine these conclusions.

Rabocheye Dyelo is "particularly" displeased with *Iskra's* and *Zarya's* "inclination to predict a rupture between the *Mountain* and the *Gironde* in international Social-Democracy."*

> "Generally speaking," writes B. Krichevsky, editor of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, "this talk about the *Mountain* and the *Gironde* that is heard in the ranks of Social-Democracy represents a shallow historical analogy, which looks strange when it comes from the pen of a Marxist. The Mountain and the Gironde did not represent two different temperaments, or intellectual tendencies, as ideologist historians may think, but two different classes or strata—the middle bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat on the other. In the modern Socialist movement, however, there is no conflict of class interests; the Socialist movement in its entirety, *all* of its diverse forms [B. K.'s italics], including the most pronounced Bernsteinites, stand on the basis of the class interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle, for its political and economic emancipation." (Pp. 32-33.)

A bold assertion! Has not B. Krichevsky heard the fact, long ago noted, that it is precisely the extensive participation of the "academic" *stratum* in the Socialist movement in recent years that has secured the rapid spread of Bernsteinism? And what is most important—on what does our author base his opinion that even "the most pronounced Bernsteinites" stand on the basis of the class struggle for the political and economic emancipation of the proletariat? No one knows. This determined defence of the most pronounced Bernsteinians is not supported by any kind of argument whatever. Apparently, the author believes that if he repeats what the pronounced Bernsteinites say about themselves, his assertion requires no proof. But can anything more "shallow" be imagined than an opinion of a whole tendency that is based on nothing more than what the representatives of that

* A comparison between the two tendencies among the revolutionary proletariat (the revolutionary and the opportunist) and the two tendencies among the revolutionary bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century (the Jacobin, known as the Mountain, and the Girondists) was made in a leading article in No. 2 of *Iskra*, February 1901. This article was written by Plekhanov. The Cadets, the adherents of the journal *Bez Zaglavia* (*Without a Title*) and the Mensheviks to this day love to refer to the Jacobinism in Russian Social-Democracy but they prefer to remain silent about or... to forget the circumstance that Plekhanov used this term for the first time against the Right wing of Social-Democracy. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

tendency say about themselves? Can anything more shallow be imagined than the subsequent "homily" about the two different and even diametrically opposite types, or paths, of Party development? (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, pp. 34-35.) The German Social-Democrats, you see, recognize complete freedom of criticism, but the French do not, and it is precisely the latter that present an example of the "harmfulness of intolerance."

To which we reply that the very example of B. Krichevsky proves that those who regard history literally from the "Ilovaysky"* point of view sometimes describe themselves as Marxists. There is no need whatever, in explaining the unity of the German Socialist Party and the dismembered state of the French Socialist Party, to search for the special features in the history of the respective countries, to compare the conditions of military semi-absolutism in the one country with republican parliamentarism in the other, or to analyse the effects of the Paris Commune and the effects of the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany;** to compare the economic life and economic development of the two countries, or recall that "the unexampled growth of German Social-Democracy" was accompanied by a strenuous struggle, unexampled in the history of Socialism, not only against mistaken theories (Mühlberger, Dühring,*** the *Katheder*-Socialists), but also against mistaken tactics (Lassalle), etc., etc. All that is superfluous! The French quarrel among themselves because they are intolerant; the Germans are united because they are good boys.

And observe, this piece of matchless profundity is intended to "refute" the fact which is a complete answer to the defence of Bernsteinism. The question as to whether the Bernsteinians *do stand* on the basis of the class struggle of the proletariat can be completely and irrevocably answered only by historical experience. Consequently, the example of France, is the most

* Ilovaysky—author of the standard school textbooks on history in use in Russian schools before the Revolution. Their purpose was to educate the student youth in the spirit of "loyalty to the Tsar." These textbooks were proverbial for their sheer ignorance and anti-scientific treatment of Russian history.—*Ed.*

** The Anti-Socialist Law—an exceptional law against Socialists passed by the Reichstag in 1878 on a motion introduced by Bismarck the express purpose of which was to suppress the Social-Democratic movement in Germany. The law was repealed in 1890.—*Ed.*

*** At the time Engels hurled his attack against Dühring, many representatives of German Social-Democracy inclined towards the latter's views, and accusations of acerbity, intolerance, uncomradely polemics, etc., were even publicly hurled at Engels at the Party Congress. At the Congress of 1877, Most, and his supporters, moved a resolution to prohibit the publication of Engels' articles in *Vorwärts* because "they do not interest the overwhelming majority of the readers," and Wahlteich declared that the publication of these articles had caused great damage to the Party, that Dühring had also rendered services to Social-Democracy: "We must utilize everyone in the interest of the Party; let the professors engage in polemics if they care to do so but *Vorwärts* is not the place in which to conduct them." (*Vorwärts*, No. 65, June 6, 1877.) Here we have another example of the defence of "freedom of criticism," and it would do our legal critics and illegal opportunists, who love so much to quote examples from the Germans, a deal of good to ponder over it!

important one in this respect, because France is the only country in which the Bernsteinians attempted to *stand* independently, on their own feet, with the warm approval of their German colleagues (and partly also of the Russian opportunists). (*Cf. Rabocheye Dyelo*, Nos. 2-3, pp. 83-84.) The reference to the "intolerance" of the French, apart from its "historical" significance (in the Nozdrev sense*), turns out to be merely an attempt to obscure a very unpleasant fact with angry invectives.

But we are not even prepared to make a present of the Germans to B. Krichevsky and to the numerous other champions of "freedom of criticism." The "most pronounced Bernsteinians" are still tolerated in the ranks of the German Party only because they *submit* to the Hanover resolution, which emphatically rejected Bernstein's "amendments," and to the Lübeck resolution, which (notwithstanding the diplomatic terms in which it is couched) contains a direct warning to Bernstein. It is a debatable point, from the standpoint of the interests of the German Party, whether diplomacy was appropriate and whether, in this case, a bad peace is better than a good quarrel; in short, opinions may differ in regard to the expediency, or not, of the *methods* employed to reject Bernsteinism, but one cannot fail to see the fact that the German Party *did* reject Bernsteinism on two occasions. Therefore, to think that the German example endorses the thesis: "The most pronounced Bernsteinians stand on the basis of the proletarian class struggle, for its economic and political emancipation," means failing absolutely to understand what is going on before one's eyes.

More than that. As we have already observed, *Rabocheye Dyelo* comes before *Russian* Social-Democracy, demands "freedom of criticism," and defends Bernsteinism. Apparently it came to the conclusion that we were unfair to our "critics" and Bernsteinites. To whom were we unfair, when and how? What was the unfairness? About this not a word. *Rabocheye Dyelo* does not name a single Russian critic or Bernsteinian! All that is left for us to do is to make one of two possible suppositions: first, that the unfairly treated party is none other than *Rabocheye Dyelo* itself (and that is confirmed by the fact that, in the two articles in No. 10 reference is made only to the insults hurled at *Rabocheye Dyelo* by *Zarya* and *Iskra*). If that is the case, how is the strange fact to be explained that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which always vehemently dissociates itself from Bernsteinism, could not defend itself, without putting in a word on behalf of the "most pronounced Bernsteinites" and of freedom of criticism? The second supposition is that third persons have been treated unfairly. If the second supposition is correct, then why are these persons not named?

We see, therefore, that *Rabocheye Dyelo* is continuing to play the game of hide-and-seek that it has played (as we shall prove further on) ever

* The allusion is to Nozdrev, a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, a scandalmonger and cheat, who continually got into trouble. Gogol calls him a "historical" personage because no sooner did he make his appearance anywhere than he would insist on telling the scandalous history of so-and-so.—*Ed.*

since it commenced publication. And note the *first* practical application of this greatly extolled "freedom of criticism." As a matter of fact, not only was it forthwith reduced to abstention from all criticism, but also to abstention from expressing independent views altogether. The very *Rabocheye Dyelo* which avoids mentioning Russian Bernsteinism as if it were a shameful disease (to use Starovyer's apt expression) proposes, for the treatment of this disease, to *copy word for word* the latest German prescription for the treatment of the German variety of the disease! Instead of freedom of criticism—slavish (worse: monkey-like) imitation! The very same social and political content of modern international opportunism reveals itself in a variety of ways according to its national characteristics. In one country the opportunists long ago came out under a separate flag, while in others they ignored theory and in practice conducted a radical-socialist policy. In a third country, several members of the revolutionary party have deserted to the camp of opportunism and strive to achieve their aims not by an open struggle for principles and for new tactics, but by gradual, unobserved and, if one may so express it, unpunishable corruption of their Party. In a fourth country again, similar deserters employ the same methods in the gloom of political slavery, and with an extremely peculiar combination of "legal" with "illegal" activity, etc., etc. To talk about freedom of criticism and Bernsteinism as a condition for uniting the *Russian* Social-Democrats, and not to explain how *Russian* Bernsteinism has manifested itself, and what fruits it has borne, means talking for the purpose of saying nothing.

We shall try, if only in a few words, to say what *Rabocheye Dyelo* did not want to say (or perhaps did not even understand).

C. Criticism in Russia

The peculiar position of Russia in regard to the point we are examining is that *the very beginning* of the spontaneous labour movement on the one hand and the change of progressive public opinion towards Marxism on the other, was marked by the combination of obviously heterogeneous elements under a common flag for the purpose of fighting the common enemy (obsolete social and political views*). We refer to the heyday of "legal Marxism." Speaking generally, this was an extremely curious phenomenon that no one in the 'eighties or the beginning of the 'nineties would have believed possible. In a country ruled by an autocracy, in which the press is completely shackled, and in a period of intense political reaction in which even the tiniest outgrowth of political discontent and protest was suppressed, the theory of revolutionary Marxism suddenly forces its way into the *censored* literature, written in Aesopian language, but under-

* Reference is to Narodism.—*Ed.*

stood by the "interested." The government had accustomed itself to regarding only the theory of (revolutionary) "Narodnaya Volya"-ism as dangerous, without observing its internal evolution, as is usually the case, and rejoicing at the criticism levelled against it *no matter from what quarter it came.* Quite a considerable time elapsed (according to our Russian calculations) before the government realized what had happened and the unwieldy army of censors and gendarmes discovered the new enemy and flung itself upon him. Meanwhile, Marxian books were published one after another, Marxian journals and newspapers were founded, nearly everyone became a Marxist, Marxism was flattered, the Marxists were courted and the book publishers rejoiced at the extraordinary, ready sale of Marxian literature. It was quite natural, therefore, that among the Marxian novices who were caught in this atmosphere, there should be more than one "author who got a swelled head*. . . ."

We can now speak calmly of this period as of an event of the past. It is no secret that the brief period in which Marxism blossomed on the surface of our literature was called forth by the alliance between people of extreme and of extremely moderate views. In point of fact, the latter were bourgeois democrats; and this was the conclusion (so strikingly confirmed by their subsequent "critical" development) that intruded itself on the minds of certain persons even when the "alliance" was still intact.**

That being the case, does not the responsibility for the subsequent "confusion" rest mainly upon the revolutionary Social-Democrats who entered into alliance with these future "critics"?*** This question, together with a reply in the affirmative, is sometimes heard from people with excessively rigid views. But these people are absolutely wrong. Only those who have no self-reliance can fear to enter into temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single political party could exist without entering into such alliances. The combination with the "legal Marxists" was in its way the first really political alliance contracted by Russian Social-Democrats. Thanks to this alliance, an astonishingly rapid victory was obtained over Narodism, and Marxian ideas (even though in a vulgarized form) became very widespread. Moreover, the alliance was not concluded altogether without "conditions." The proof: the burning by the censor, in 1895, of the Marxian symposium, *Materials on the Problem of the Economic Development of Russia.***** If the literary agreement with the "legal Marxists" can be

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* "The author who got a swelled head" was the title of one of Gorky's early short stories.—*Ed.*

** This refers to an article by K. Tulin [Lenin—*Ed.*] written against Struve. The article was compiled from an essay entitled "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature." (Author's note to the 1908 edition. See Lenin, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Vol. I, pp. 457-66.)—*Ed.*

*** "Critics"—"legal Marxists"—the critics of Marx, *viz,,* Struve, Bulgakov, Berdyaev and others.—*Ed.*

**** This symposium contained articles by Lenin (under the pen name of Tulin), Plekhanov, Potresov and others.—*Ed.*

compared with a political alliance, then that book can be compared with a political treaty.

The rupture, of course, did not occur because the "allies" proved to be bourgeois democrats. On the contrary, the representatives of the latter tendency were the natural and desirable allies of Social-Democracy in so far as its democratic tasks that were brought to the front by the prevailing situation in Russia were concerned. But an essential condition for such an alliance must be complete liberty for Socialists to reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the bourgeoisie. However, the Bernsteinian and "critical" tendency, to which the majority of the "legal Marxists" turned, deprived the Socialists of this liberty and corrupted Socialist consciousness by vulgarizing Marxism, by preaching the toning down of social antagonisms, by declaring the idea of the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat to be absurd, by restricting the labour movement and the class struggle to narrow trade unionism and to a "realistic" struggle for petty, gradual reforms. This was tantamount to the bourgeois democrat's denial of Socialism's right to independence and, consequently, of its right to existence; in practice it meant a striving to convert the nascent labour movement into an appendage of the liberals.

Naturally, under such circumstances a rupture was necessary. But the "peculiar" feature of Russia manifested itself in that this rupture simply meant the elimination of the Social-Democrats from the most accessible and widespread "legal" literature. The "ex-Marxists" who took up the flag of "criticism," and who obtained almost a monopoly of the "criticism" of Marxism, entrenched themselves in this literature. Catchwords like: "Against orthodoxy" and "Long live freedom of criticism" (now repeated by *Rabocheye Dyelo*) immediately became the fashion, and the fact that neither the censor nor the gendarmes could resist this fashion is apparent from the publication of *three* Russian editions of Bernstein's celebrated book (celebrated in the Herostratus sense) and from the fact that the books by Bernstein, Prokopovich and others were recommended by Zubatov.* (*Iskra*, No. 10.) Upon the Social-Democrats was now imposed a task that was difficult in itself, and made incredibly more difficult by purely external obstacles, *viz.*, the task of fighting against the new tendency. And this tendency did not confine itself to the sphere of literature. The turn towards "criticism" was accompanied by the turn towards "Economism" that was taken by Social-Democratic practical workers.

The manner in which the contacts and mutual interdependence of legal criticism and illegal Economism arose and grew is an interesting subject in itself, and may very well be treated in a special article. It is sufficient to note here that these contacts undoubtedly existed. The notoriety deserved-

* Zubatov was Chief of the Moscow Secret Police and initiator of "police socialism," *i.e.*, pseudo-workers' organizations founded under the protection of tsarist gendarmes and police with the aim of diverting the workers from the revolutionary movement.—*Ed.*

ly acquired by the *Credo** was due precisely to the frankness with which it formulated these contacts and revealed the fundamental political tendencies of "Economism," *viz.*, let the workers carry on the economic struggle (it would be more correct to say the trade union struggle, because the latter also embraces specifically labour politics), and let the Marxian intelligentsia merge with the liberals for the political "struggle." Thus it turned out that trade union work "among the people" meant fulfilling the first part of this task, and legal criticism meant fulfilling the second part. This statement proved to be such an excellent weapon against Economism that, had there been no *Credo*, it would have been worth inventing.

The *Credo* was not invented, but it was published without the consent and perhaps even against the will of its authors. At all events the present writer, who was partly responsible for dragging this new "program" into the light of day,** has heard complaints and reproaches to the effect that copies of the *résumé* of their views which was dubbed the *Credo* were distributed and even published in the press together with the protest! We refer to this episode because it reveals a very peculiar state of mind among our Economists, *viz.*, a fear of publicity. This is a feature of Economism generally, and not of the authors of the *Credo* alone. It was revealed by that most outspoken and honest advocate of Economism, *Rabochaya Mysl*, and by *Rabocheye Dyelo* (which was indignant over the publication of "Economist" documents in the *Vademecum****), as well as by the Kiev Committee, which two years ago refused to permit the publication of its *profession de foi*,**** together with a repudiation of it, and by many other individual representatives of Economism.

This fear of criticism displayed by the advocates of freedom of criticism cannot be attributed solely to craftiness (although no doubt craftiness has something to do with it: it would be unwise to expose the young and as yet puny movements to the enemies' attack!). No, the majority of the Economists quite sincerely disapprove (and by the very nature of Economism they must disapprove) of all theoretical controversies, factional disagreements, of broad political questions, of schemes for organizing revolutionaries, etc. "Leave all this sort of thing to the exiles abroad!" said a fairly consistent

* *Credo*—a statement of the views of the Economists, drawn up by Kuskova.—*Ed.*

** Reference is made here to the *Protest Signed by the Seventeen* against the *Credo*. The present writer took part in drawing up this protest (the end of 1899). The protest and the *Credo* were published abroad in the spring of 1900. [See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. I.—*Ed.*] It is now known from the article written by Madame Kuskova, I think in *Byloye (Past)*, that she was the author of the *Credo*, and that Mr. Prokopovich was very prominent among the "Economists" abroad at that time. [Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*]

*** *Vademecum* (literally *guide*) *for the Editors of "Rabocheye Dyelo"*—the title of a collection of documents relating to "Economism" brought out by Plekhanov.—*Ed.*

**** *Profession de foi*—profession of faith. The title of a document composed by the Kiev Committee in which the "Economists" expounded their program. It was subjected to a withering criticism by Lenin in an article entitled "Anent the *Profession de foi*."—*Ed.*

Economist to me one day, and thereby he expressed a very widespread (and purely trade unionist) view: our business, he said, is the labour movement, the labour organizations, here, in our localities; all the rest are merely the inventions of doctrinaires, an "exaggeration of the importance of ideology," as the authors of the letter, published in *Iskra*, No. 12,* expressed it, in unison with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10.

The question now arises: seeing what the peculiar features of Russian "criticism" and Russian Bernsteinism are, what should those who desired to oppose opportunism, in deeds and not merely in words, have done? First of all, they should have made efforts to resume the theoretical work that was only just begun in the period of "legal Marxism," and that has now again fallen on the shoulders of the illegal workers. Unless such work is undertaken the successful growth of the movement is impossible. Secondly, they should have actively combated legal "criticism" that was greatly corrupting people's minds. Thirdly, they should have actively counteracted the confusion and vacillation prevailing in practical work, and should have exposed and repudiated every conscious or unconscious attempt to degrade our program and tactics.

That *Rabocheye Dyelo* did none of these things is a well-known fact, and further on we shall deal with this well-known fact from various aspects. At the moment, however, we desire merely to show what a glaring contradiction there is between the demand for "freedom of criticism" and the peculiar features of our native criticism and Russian Economism. Indeed, glance at the text of the resolution by which the "Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats" endorsed the point of view of *Rabocheye Dyelo*.

> "In the interests of the further ideological development of Social-Democracy, we recognize the freedom to criticize Social-Democratic theory in Party literature to be absolutely necessary in so far as this criticism does not run counter to the class and revolutionary character of this theory." (*Two Congresses*, p. 10.)

And what is the argument behind this resolution? The resolution "in its first part coincides with the resolution of the Lübeck Party Congress on Bernstein...." In the simplicity of their souls the "Unionists" failed to observe the *testimonium paupertatis* (certificate of poverty) they give themselves by this piece of imitativeness! ... "But ... in its second part, it restricts freedom of criticism much more than did the Lübeck Party Congress."

So the "Union's" resolution was directed against Russian Bernsteinism? If it was not, then the reference to Lübeck is utterly absurd! But it is not true to say that it "restricts freedom of criticism." In passing their Hanover resolution, the Germans, point by point, rejected *precisely the amendments*

* Lenin cited this letter of the "Economists" in his article entitled "A Conversation with the Advocates of Economism" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV, Book II, pp. 65-71).—*Ed.*

proposed by Bernstein, while in their Lübeck resolution they cautioned *Bernstein personally*, and named him in the resolution. Our "free" imitators, however, *do not make a single reference to a single manifestation* of Russian "criticism" and Russian Economism and, in view of this omission, the bare reference to the class and revolutionary character of the theory leaves exceedingly wide scope for misinterpretation, particularly when the "Union" refuses to identify "so-called Economism" with opportunism. (*Two Congresses*, p. 8, par. 1.) But all this *en passant*. The important thing to note is that the opportunist attitude towards revolutionary Social-Democrats in Russia is the very opposite of that in Germany. In Germany, as we know, revolutionary Social-Democrats are in favour of preserving what is: they stand in favour of the old program and tactics which are universally known, and after many decades of experience have become clear in all their details. The "critics" desire to introduce changes, and as these critics represent an insignificant minority, and as they are very shy and halting in their revisionist efforts, one can understand the motives of the majority in confining themselves to the dry rejection of "innovations." In Russia, however, it is the critics and Economists who are in favour of preserving what is: the "critics" want us to continue to regard them as Marxists, and to guarantee them the "freedom of criticism" which they enjoyed to the full (for, as a matter of fact, they never recognized any kind of *Party* ties,* and, moreover, we never had a generally recognized Party organ which could "restrict freedom" of criticism even by giving advice); the Economists want the revolutionaries to recognize the "competency of the present movement" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 25), *i.e.*, to recognize the "legitimacy" of what exists; they do not want the "ideologists" to try to "divert" the movement from the path that "is determined by the interaction of material elements and material environment" (letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12); they want recognition "for the only struggle that the workers can conduct under present conditions," which in their opinion is the struggle "which they are actually conducting at the present time." (Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl*, p. 14.) We revolutionary Social-Democrats, on the contrary, are dissatisfied with this worshipping of spontaneity, *i.e.*, worshipping what is "at the present time";

*The absence of public Party ties and Party traditions by itself marks such a cardinal difference between Russia and Germany that it should have warned all sensible Socialists against imitating blindly. But here is an example of the lengths to which "freedom of criticism" goes in Russia. Mr. Bulgakov, the Russian critic, utters the following reprimand to the Austrian critic, Hertz: "Notwithstanding the independence of his conclusions, Hertz, on this point [on co-operative societies] apparently remains tied by the opinions of his Party, and although he disagrees with it in details, he dare not reject common principles." (*Capitalism and Agriculture*, Vol. II, p. 287.) The subject of a politically enslaved state, in which nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand of the population are corrupted to the marrow of their bones by political subservience, and completely lack the conception of Party honour and Party ties, superciliously reprimands a citizen of a constitutional state for being excessively "tied by the opinion of his Party!" Our illegal organizations have nothing else to do, of course, but draw up resolutions about freedom of criticism. . . .

we demand that the tactics that have prevailed in recent years be changed; we declare that "before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation." (See announcement of the publication of *Iskra.*) In a word, the Germans stand for what is and reject changes; we demand changes, and reject subservience to, *and conciliation with, what is.*

This "little" difference our "free" copyists of German resolutions failed to notice!

D. Engels on the Importance of the Theoretical Struggle

"Dogmatism, doctrinairism," "ossification of the Party—the inevitable retribution that follows the violent strait-lacing of thought"—these are the enemies which the knightly champions of "freedom of criticism" rise up in arms against in *Rabocheye Dyelo.* We are very glad that this question has been brought up and we would only propose to add to it another question:

Who are the judges?

Before us lie two publisher's announcements. One, *The Program of the Periodical Organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats—Rabocheye Dyelo* (reprint from No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*), and the other an announcement of the resumption of the publications of the "Emancipation of Labour Group." Both are dated 1899, a time when the "crisis of Marxism" had long since been under discussion. And what do we find? You would seek in vain in the first publication for any reference to this phenomenon, or a definite statement of the position the new organ intends to adopt on this question. Of theoretical work and the urgent tasks that now confront it not a word is said either in this program or in the supplements to it that were *passed by the Third Congress of the Union in 1901 (Two Congresses,* pp. 15-18). During the whole of this time the editorial board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* ignored theoretical questions, in spite of the fact that these questions were agitating the minds of all Social-Democrats all over the world.

The other announcement, on the contrary, first of all points to the diminution of interest in theory observed in recent years, imperatively demands "vigilant attention to the theoretical side of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat," and calls for "ruthless criticism of the Bernsteinian and other anti-revolutionary tendencies" in our movement. The issues of *Zarya* that have appeared show how this program has been carried out.

Thus we see that high-sounding phrases against the ossification of thought, etc., conceal unconcern and impotence in the development of theoretical thought. The case of the Russian Social-Democrats very strikingly illustrates the fact observed in the whole of Europe (and long ago noted also by the German Marxists) that the notorious freedom of criticism does not imply the substitution of one theory for another, but freedom from every complete and consistent theory; it implies eclecticism and lack of principle. Those

who have the slightest acquaintance with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of theoretical training joined the movement because of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can therefore judge how tactless *Rabocheye Dyelo* is when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs." To repeat these words in a period of theoretical chaos is like wishing mourners at a funeral "many happy returns of the day." Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Program, in which he *sharply condemns* eclecticism in the formulation of principles: If you must unite, Marx wrote to the Party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not haggle over principles, do not make "concessions" in theory. This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who strive—in his name!—to belittle the significance of theory.

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This thought cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity. Yet, for Russian Social-Democrats the importance of theory is enhanced by three circumstances, which are often forgotten: firstly, by the fact that our Party is only in process of formation, its features are only just becoming outlined, and it is yet far from having settled accounts with other trends of revolutionary thought, which threaten to divert the movement from the proper path. On the contrary, we only very recently observed a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary trends (which Axelrod long ago warned the Economists would happen). Under such circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an "unimportant" mistake may lead to most deplorable consequences, and only short-sighted people can consider factional disputes and a strict differentiation between shades inopportune and superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for many many years to come may depend on the strengthening of one or other "shade."

Secondly, the Social-Democratic movement is essentially international. This does not merely mean that we must combat national chauvinism, but also that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only if it assimilates the experience of other countries. And in order to assimilate this experience, it is not enough merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest resolutions. This requires the ability to treat this experience critically and to test it independently. Anybody who realizes how enormously the modern labour movement has grown and become ramified will understand what an amount of theoretical force and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is needed to fulfil this task.

Thirdly, the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other Socialist Party in the world. Further on we

shall have occasion to deal with the political and organizational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we only wish to state that the *role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory*. In order to understand what this means at all concretely, let the reader recall predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy like Hertzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and the brilliant galaxy of revolutionaries of the 'seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which Russian literature is now acquiring, let him ... but that is enough!

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognizes *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, *but three, adding to the first two the theoretical struggle*. His recommendations to the German labour movement, which had become strong, practically and politically, are so instructive from the standpoint of present-day problems and controversies, that we hope the reader will not be vexed with us for quoting a long passage from his prefatory note to *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*,* which has long become a bibliographical rarity.

> "The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called 'educated' people of Germany have almost completely lost. Without German philosophy which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific Socialism—the only scientific Socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scientific Socialism would never have passed *so entirely into their flesh and blood as has been the case*. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the English labour movement moves so slowly in spite of the splendid organization of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism in its original form among the French and Belgians, and in the further caricatured form at the hands of Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.
>
> "The second advantage is that chronologically speaking the Germans were almost the last to come into the labour movement. Just as German theoretical Socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and utopianism, have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by

* *Dritter Abdruck*, Leipzig. 1875, *Verlag der Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei*. (*The Peasant War in Germany*. Third edition. Co-operative Publishers, Leipzig, 1875.—*Ed.*)

us—so the practical labour movement in Germany must never forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilize their dearly-bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the English trade unions and the French workers' political struggles which came before, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we now be?

"It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a labour movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted from its three sides, the theoretical, the political and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalists), in harmony, co-ordination and in a planned way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack, that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

"It is due to this advantageous situation on the one hand, to the insular peculiarities of the English and to the forcible suppression of the French movement on the other, that the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But as long as they occupy it, let us hope that they will fill it in a fitting manner. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. It is in particular the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that Socialism, since it has become a science, must be pursued as a science, *i.e.*, it must be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever clearer insight, thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organization both of the party and of the trade unions.... If the German workers proceed in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any one country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line, and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events will demand from them heightened courage, heightened determination and the power to act."

Engels' words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly grave trials in the form of the Anti-Socialist Law. And the German workers really met them armed for battle and succeeded in emerging from them in triumph.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably more

grave; it will have to fight a monster compared with which the Anti-Socialist Law in a constitutional country seems but a pigmy. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks that confront the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we are right in counting upon acquiring this honourable title already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the 'seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement—which is a thousand times broader and deeper—with the same devoted determination and vigour.

II

THE SPONTANEITY OF THE MASSES AND THE CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

We have said that our movement, much wider and deeper than the movement of the 'seventies, must be inspired with the same devoted determination and energy that inspired the movement at that time. Indeed, no one, we think, has up to now doubted that the strength of the modern movement lies in the awakening of the masses (principally, the industrial proletariat), and that its weakness lies in the lack of consciousness and initiative among the revolutionary leaders.

However, a most astonishing discovery has been made recently, which threatens to overthrow all the views that have hitherto prevailed on this question. This discovery was made by *Rabocheye Dyelo,* which in its controversy with *Iskra* and *Zarya* did not confine itself to making objections on separate points, but tried to ascribe "general disagreements" to a more profound cause—to the "disagreement concerning the estimation of the *relative* importance of the spontaneous and consciously 'methodical' element." *Rabocheye Dyelo's* indictment was that *"it belittles the significance of the objective or the spontaneous element of development."** To this we say: if the controversy with *Iskra* and *Zarya* resulted in absolutely nothing more than causing *Rabocheye Dyelo* to hit upon these "general disagreements" that single result would give us considerable satisfaction, so important is this thesis and so clearly does it illuminate the quintessence of the present-day theoretical and political differences that exist among Russian Social-Democrats.

That is why the question of the relation between consciousness and spontaneity is of such enormous general interest, and that is why this question must be dealt with in great detail.

* *Rabocheye Dyelo,* No. 10, September 1901, pp. 17-18. (*Rabocheye Dyelo's* italics.)

A. The Beginning of the Spontaneous Revival

In the previous chapter we pointed out how *universally* absorbed the educated youth of Russia was in the theories of Marxism in the middle of the 'nineties. The strikes that followed the famous St. Petersburg industrial war of 1896 assumed a similar wholesale character. The fact that these strikes spread over the whole of Russia clearly showed how deep the reviving popular movement was, and if we must speak of the "spontaneous element" then, of course, we must admit that this strike movement certainly bore a spontaneous character. But there is a difference between spontaneity and spontaneity. Strikes occurred in Russia in the 'seventies and in the 'sixties (and also in the first half of the nineteenth century), and these strikes were accompanied by the "spontaneous" destruction of machinery, etc. Compared with these "riots" the strikes of the 'nineties might even be described as "conscious," to such an extent do they mark the progress which the labour movement had made for that period. This shows that the "spontaneous element," in essence, represents nothing more nor less than consciousness in an *embryonic form.* Even the primitive riots expressed the awakening of consciousness to a certain extent: the workers abandoned their age-long faith in the permanence of the system which oppressed them. They began . . . I shall not say to understand, but to sense the necessity for collective resistance, and definitely abandoned their slavish submission to their superiors. But all this was more in the nature of outbursts of desperation and vengeance than of *struggle.* The strikes of the 'nineties revealed far greater flashes of consciousness: definite demands were put forward, the time to strike was carefully chosen, known cases and examples in other places were discussed, etc. While the riots were simply uprisings of the oppressed, the systematic strikes represented the class struggle in embryo, but only in embryo. Taken by themselves, these strikes were simply trade union struggles, but not yet Social-Democratic struggles. They testified to the awakening antagonisms between workers and employers, but the workers were not and could not be conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system, *i.e.*, it was not yet Social-Democratic consciousness. In this sense, the strikes of the 'nineties, in spite of the enormous progress they represented as compared with the "riots," represented a purely spontaneous movement.

We said that *there could not yet be* Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, *i.e.*, it may itself realize the necessity for combining in unions, for fighting against the employers and for striving to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc.* The theory of Socialism, however, grew

* Trade unionism does not exclude "politics" altogether, as some imagine. Trade unions have always conducted political (but not Social-Democratic) agitation and

out of the philosophic, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated *representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals*. According to their social status, the founders of modern scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged *to the bourgeois intelligentsia*. Similarly, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose quite independently of the spontaneous growth of the labour movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of ideas among the revolutionary Socialist intelligentsia. At the time of which we are speaking, *i.e.*, the middle of the 'nineties, this doctrine not only represented the completely formulated program of the "Emancipation of Labour Group," but had already won the adherence of the majority of the revolutionary youth in Russia.

Hence, simultaneously, we had both the spontaneous awakening of the masses of the workers, the awakening to conscious life and struggle, and the striving of the revolutionary youth, armed with the Social-Democratic theories, to reach the workers. In this connection it is particularly important to state the oft-forgotten (and comparatively little-known) fact that the *early* Social-Democrats of that period *zealously carried on economic agitation* (being guided in this by the really useful instructions contained in the pamphlet *On Agitation* that was still in manuscript), but they did not regard this as their sole task. On the contrary, *right from the very beginning* they advanced in general the historical tasks of Russian Social-Democracy in their widest scope, and particularly the task of overthrowing the autocracy. For example, towards the end of 1895, the St. Petersburg group of Social-Democrats, which founded the "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class," prepared the first number of the newspaper called *Rabocheye Dyelo*. This number was ready to go to press when it was seized by the gendarmes who, on the night of December 8, 1895, raided the house of one of the members of the group, Anatole Alekseyevich Vaneyev,* and so the original *Rabocheye Dyelo* was not destined to see the light of day. The leading article in this number (which perhaps in thirty years' time some *Russkaya Starina*** will unearth in the archives of the Department of Police) described the historical tasks of the working class in Russia, of which the achievement of political liberty is regarded as the most important. This number also contained an article entitled "What Are Our Cabinet Ministers Thinking Of?" which dealt with the breaking up of the elementary education committees by the police. In addition, there was some

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struggle We shall deal with the difference between trade union politics and Social-Democratic politics in the next chapter.

* A. A. Vaneyev died in Eastern Siberia in 1899 from consumption, which he contracted as a result of his solitary confinement in prison prior to his banishment. That is why we are able to publish the above information, the authenticity of which we guarantee, for it comes from persons who were *closely and directly acquainted* with A. A. Vaneyev.

** *Russkaya Starina (Russian Antiquity)*—a monarchist historical monthly.—*Ed.*

correspondence, from St. Petersburg, as well as from other parts of Russia (for example, a letter on the assault on the workers in the Yaroslavl Province). This, if we are not mistaken "first attempt" of the Russian Social-Democrats of the 'nineties was not a narrow, local, and certainly not an "economic" newspaper, but one that aimed to unite the strike movement with the revolutionary movement against the autocracy, and to win all the victims of oppression and political and reactionary obscurantism over to the side of Social-Democracy. No one in the slightest degree acquainted with the state of the movement at that period could doubt that such a paper would have been fully approved of by the workers of the capital and the revolutionary intelligentsia and would have had a wide circulation. The failure of the enterprise merely showed that the Social-Democrats of that time were unable to meet the immediate requirements of the time owing to their lack of revolutionary experience and practical training. The same thing must be said with regard to the *St. Petersburg Rabochy Listok** and particularly with regard to *Rabochaya Gazeta* and the *Manifesto* of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party which was established in the spring of 1898. Of course, we would not dream of blaming the Social-Democrats of that time for this unpreparedness. But in order to obtain the benefit of the experience of that movement, and to draw practical lessons from it, we must thoroughly understand the causes and significance of this or that shortcoming. For that reason it is extremely important to establish the fact that part (perhaps even a majority) of the Social-Democrats, operating in the period of 1895-98, quite justly considered it possible even then, at the very beginning of the "spontaneous" movement, to come forward with a most extensive program and fighting tactics.** The lack of training of the majority of the revolutionaries, being quite a natural phenomenon, could not have aroused any particular fears. Since the tasks were properly defined, since the energy existed for repeated attempts to fulfil these tasks, the temporary failures were not such a great misfortune. Revolutionary experience and organizational skill are things that can be

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* *St. Petersburg Rabochy Listok (Workers' Sheet)*—a newspaper published in St. Petersburg by the "League of Struggle" in 1897. In all only two numbers were issued.—*Ed.*

** "*Iskra*, which adopts a hostile attitude towards the activities of the Social-Democrats of the end of the 'nineties, ignores the fact that at that time the conditions for any other kind of work except fighting for petty demands were absent," declare the Economists in their *Letter to Russian Social-Democratic Organs*. (*Iskra*, No. 12.) The facts quoted above show that the statement about "absent conditions" *is the very opposite of the truth.* Not only at the end, but even in the middle of the 'nineties, all the conditions existed *for other* work, besides fighting for petty demands, all the conditions—except the sufficient training of the leaders. Instead of frankly admitting our, the ideologists', the leaders', lack of sufficient training—the "Economists" try to throw the blame entirely upon the "absent conditions," upon the influences of material environment which determine the road from which it will be impossible for any ideologist to divert the movement. What is this but slavish cringing before spontaneity, but the fact that the "ideologists" are enamoured of their own shortcomings?

acquired provided the desire is there to acquire these qualities, provided the shortcomings are recognized—which in revolutionary activity is more than halfway towards removing them!

It was a great misfortune, however, when this consciousness began to grow dim (it was very active among the workers of the groups mentioned), when people appeared—and even Social-Democratic organs—who were prepared to regard shortcomings as virtues, who even tried to invent a *theoretical* basis for *slavish cringing before spontaneity*. It is time to summarize this tendency, the substance of which is incorrectly and too narrowly described as "Economism."

B. Bowing to Spantaneity. Rabochaya Mysl

Before dealing with the literary manifestation of this subservience, we should like to mention the following characteristic fact (communicated to us from the above-mentioned source), which throws some light on the circumstances in which the two future conflicting tendencies in Russian Social-Democracy arose and grew among the comrades working in St. Petersburg. *In the beginning of 1897, just prior to their banishment, A. A. Vaneyev* and several of his comrades* attended a private meeting at which the "old" and "young" members of the "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class" gathered. The conversation centred chiefly around* the question of organization, and particularly around the "rules for a workers' benefit fund," which, in their final form, were published in *Listok Rabotnika (Workingman's Sheet)*, No. 9-10, p. 46. Sharp differences were immediately revealed between the "old" members ("Decembrists"** as the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats jestingly called them) and several of the "young" members (who subsequently actively collaborated on the *Rabochaya Mysl*), and a very heated discussion ensued. The "young" members defended the main principles of the rules in the form in which they were published. The "old" members said that this was not what was wanted, that first of all it was necessary to consolidate the "League of Struggle" into an organization of revolutionaries which should have control of all the various workers' benefit funds, students' propaganda circles, etc. It goes without saying that the controversialists had no suspicion at that time that these disagreements were the beginning of a divergence; on the contrary, they regarded them as being of an isolated and casual nature. But this fact

* This refers to Lenin, Krzhizhanovsky and other members of the St. Petersburg "League of Struggle" who were released from prison on February 26, 1897 and granted a few days' leave prior to being banished to Siberia. They utilized this period of grace to confer with the "young" leaders of the League who were at liberty and inclining towards "Economism."—*Ed.*

** The reference here is to Lenin and his associates in the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, who had been arrested by the tsarist police in December 1895.—*Ed.*

shows that "Economism" did not arise and spread in Russia without a fight on the part of the "old" Social-Democrats (the Economists of today are apt to forget this). And if, in the main, this struggle has not left "documentary" traces behind it, it is *solely* because the membership of the circles working at that time underwent such constant change that no continuity was established and, consequently, differences were not recorded in any documents.

The appearance of *Rabochaya Mysl* brought Economism to the light of day, but not all at once. We must picture to ourselves concretely the conditions of the work and the short-lived character of the majority of the Russian circles (and only those who have experienced this can have any exact idea of it), in order to understand how much there was accidental in the successes and failures of the new tendency in various towns, and why for a long time neither the advocates nor the opponents of this "new" tendency could make up their minds—indeed they had no opportunity to do so—as to whether this was really a new tendency or whether it was merely an expression of the lack of training of certain individuals. For example, the first mimeographed copies of *Rabochaya Mysl* never reached the great majority of Social-Democrats, and we are able to refer to the leading article in the first number only because it was reproduced in an article by V. I. (*Listok Rabotnika*, No. 9-10, p. 47 *et sup.*), who, of course, did not fail zealously but unreasonably to extol the new paper, which was so different from the papers and the schemes for papers mentioned above.* And this leading article deserves to be dealt with in detail because it so strongly expresses *the spirit of Rabochaya Mysl* and Economism generally.

After referring to the fact that the arm of the "blue-coats"** could never stop the progress of the labour movement, the leading article goes on to say: "...The virility of the labour movement is due to the fact that the workers themselves are at last taking their fate into their own hands, and out of the hands of the leaders," and this fundamental thesis is then developed in greater detail. As a matter of fact the leaders (*i.e.*, the Social-Democrats, the organizers of the League of Struggle) were, one might say, torn out of the hands of the workers by the police; yet it is made to appear that the workers were fighting against the leaders,*** and eventually

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* It should be stated in passing that the praise of *Rabochaya Mysl* in November 1898, when Economism had become fully defined, especially abroad, emanated from that same V. I., who very soon after became one of the editors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*. And yet *Rabocheye Dyelo* denied that there were two tendencies in Russian Social-Democracy, and continues to deny it to this day.

** The Russian gendarmes wore blue uniforms.—*Ed.*

*** That this simile is a correct one is shown by the following characteristic fact. When, after the arrest of the "Decembrists," the news was spread among the workers on the Schlüsselburg Road that the discovery and arrest were facilitated by an *agent-provocateur*, N. N. Mikhailov, a dental surgeon, who had been in contact with a group associated with the "Decembrists," they were so enraged that they decided to kill him.

liberated themselves from their yoke! Instead of calling upon the workers to go forward towards the consolidation of the revolutionary organization and to the expansion of political activity, they began to call for a *retreat* to the purely trade union struggle. They announced that "the economic basis of the movement is eclipsed by the effort never to forget the political ideal," and that the watchword for the movement was "Fight for an economic position" [!] or what is still better, "The workers for the workers." It was declared that strike funds "are more valuable for the movement than a hundred other organizations" (compare this statement made in October 1897 with the controversy between the "Decembrists" and the young members in the beginning of 1897), and so forth. Catchwords like: "We must concentrate, not on the 'cream' of the workers, but on the 'average', mass worker"; "Politics always obediently follows economics,"* etc., etc., became the fashion, and exercised an irresistible influence upon the masses of the youth who were attracted to the movement, but who, in the majority of cases, were acquainted only with legally expounded fragments of Marxism.

Consciousness was completely overwhelmed by spontaneity—the spontaneity of the "Social-Democrats" who repeated Mr. V.V.'s "ideas," the spontaneity of those workers who were carried away by the arguments that a kopek added to a ruble was worth more than Socialism and politics, and that they must "fight, knowing that they are fighting not for some future generation, but for themselves and their children." (Leading article in *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1.) Phrases like these have always been the favourite weapons of the West European bourgeoisie, who, while hating Socialism, strove (like the German "*Sozial-Politiker*" Hirsch) to transplant English trade unionism to their own soil and to preach to the workers that the purely trade union struggle** is the struggle for themselves and for their children, and not the struggle for some kind of Socialism for some future generation. And now the "V.V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy" repeat these bourgeois phrases. It is important at this point to note three circumstances which will be useful to us in our further analysis of *contemporary* differences.***

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* These quotations are taken from the leading article in the first number of *Rabochaya Mysl* already referred to One can judge from this the degree of theoretical training possessed by these "V.V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy," who kept repeating the crude vulgarization of "economic materialism" at a time when the Marxists were carrying on a literary war against the real V. V., who had long ago been dubbed "a past master of reactionary deeds," for holding *similar* views on the relation between politics and economics!

** The Germans even have a special expression: *Nur-Gewerkschaftler*, which means an advocate of the "pure and simple" trade union struggle.

*** We emphasize the word *contemporary* for the benefit of those who may pharisaically shrug their shoulders and say: it is easy enough to attack *Rabochaya Mysl* now, but is not all this ancient history? *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur* [change the name and the tale refers to you—*Ed.*], we reply to such contemporary pharisees whose complete mental subjection to *Rabochaya Mysl* will be *proved* further on.

First of all, the overwhelming of consciousness by spontaneity, to which we referred above, also took place *spontaneously*. This may sound like a pun, but, alas, it is the bitter truth. It did not take place as a result of an open struggle between two diametrically opposed points of view, in which one gained the victory over the other; it occurred because an increasing number of "old" revolutionaries were "torn away" by the gendarmes and because increasing numbers of "young" "V.V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy" came upon the scene. Everyone, who—I shall not say has participated in the *contemporary* Russian movement but has at least breathed its atmosphere—knows perfectly well that this was so. And the reason why we, nevertheless, strongly urge the reader to ponder over this universally known fact, and why we quote the facts, as an illustration, so to speak, about *Rabocheye Dyelo* as it first appeared, and about the controversy between the "old" and the "young" at the beginning of 1897—is that certain persons are speculating on the public's (or the very youthful youths') ignorance of these facts, and are boasting of their "democracy." We shall return to this point further on.

Secondly, in the very first literary manifestation of Economism, we observe the extremely curious and highly characteristic phenomenon—for an understanding of the differences prevailing among contemporary Social-Democrats—that the adherents of the "pure and simple" labour movement, the worshippers of the closest "organic" (the term used by *Rabocheye Dyelo*) contacts with the proletarian struggle, the opponents of the non-labour intelligentsia (notwithstanding that it is a Socialist intelligentsia) are compelled, in order to defend their positions, to resort to the arguments of the *bourgeois* "pure and simple" trade unionists. This shows that from the very outset, *Rabochaya Mysl* began unconsciously to carry out the program of the *Credo*. This shows (what the *Rabocheye Dyelo* cannot understand) that *all* worship of the spontaneity of the labour movement, all belittling of the role of "the conscious element," of the role of the party of Social-Democracy, *means, quite irrespective of whether the belittler likes it or not, strengthening the influence of the bourgeois ideology among the workers.* All those who talk about "exaggerating the importance of ideology,"* about exaggerating the role of the conscious elements,** etc., imagine that the pure and simple labour movement can work out an independent ideology for itself, if only the workers "take their fate out of the hands of the leaders." But this is a profound mistake. To supplement what has been said above, we shall quote the following profoundly true and important utterances by Karl Kautsky on the new draft program of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party:***

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* Letter of the "Economists," in *Iskra*, No. 12.

** *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10.

*** *Neue Zeit*, 1901-02, XX, I, No. 3, p. 79. The committee's draft to which Kautsky refers was passed by the Vienna Congress at the end of last year in a slightly amended form.

"Many of our revisionist critics believe that Marx asserted that economic development and the class struggle create not only the conditions for Socialist production, but also, and directly, the *consciousness* [K.K.'s italics] of its necessity. And these critics advance the argument that the most highly capitalistically developed country, England, is more remote than any other from this consciousness. Judging from the draft, one might assume that the committee which drafted the Austrian program shared this alleged orthodox-Marxian view which is thus refuted. In the draft program it is stated: 'The more capitalist development increases the numbers of the proletariat, the more the proletariat is compelled and becomes fit to fight against capitalism. The proletariat becomes conscious' of the possibility of and necessity for Socialism. In this connection Socialist consciousness is represented as a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue. Of course, Socialism, as a theory, *has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle* of the proletariat has, and just as the latter emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But Socialism and the class struggle *arise side by side and not one* out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern Socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound, scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for Socialist production as, say, modern technology and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicles of science are not the proletariat, but the *bourgeois intelligentsia* [K.K.'s italics]: it was in the minds of some members of this stratum that modern Socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduced it into the proletarian class struggle where conditions allow that to be done. Thus, Socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without (*von Aussen Hineingetragenes*), and not something that arose within it spontaneously (*urwüchsig*). Accordingly, the old Hainfeld program quite rightly stated that the task of Social-Democracy *is to imbue the proletariat* (literally: saturate the proletariat) with the *consciousness* of its position and the consciousness of its tasks. There would be no need for this if consciousness emerged of itself from the class struggle. The new draft copied this proposition from the old program, and attached it to the proposition mentioned above. But this completely broke the line of thought...."

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers in the process of their movement* *the only*

* This does not mean, of course, that the workers have no part in creating such an ideology. But they take part not as workers, but as Socialist theoreticians, like

choice is: either the bourgeois or the Socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for humanity has not created a "third" ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the Socialist ideology *in any way, to turn away from it in the slightest degree* means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. There is a lot of talk about spontaneity, but the *spontaneous* development of the labour movement leads to its becoming subordinated to the bourgeois ideology, *leads to its developing according to the program* of the *Credo*, for the spontaneous labour movement is pure and simple trade unionism, is *Nur-Gewerkschaftlerei*, and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers to the bourgeoisie. Hence, our task, the task of Social-Democracy, is to *combat spontaneity*, to *divert* the labour movement from its spontaneous, trade unionist striving to go under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy. The phrases employed by the authors of the "economic" letter in *Iskra*, No. 12, about the efforts of the most inspired ideologists not being able to divert the labour movement from the path that is determined by the interaction of the material elements and the material environment, *are tantamount to the abandonment of Socialism*, and if only the authors of this letter were capable of fearlessly considering what they say to its logical conclusion, as everyone who enters the arena of literary and public activity should do, they would have nothing to do but "fold their useless arms over their empty breasts" and ... leave the field of action to the Struves and Prokopoviches who are dragging the labour movement "along the line of least resistance," *i.e.*, along the line of bourgeois trade unionism, or to the Zubatovs who are dragging it along the line of clerical and gendarme "ideology."

Recall the example of Germany. What was the historical service Lassalle rendered to the German labour movement? It was that he *diverted* that movement from the path of trade unionism and co-operation preached by the Progressives along which it had been travelling spontaneously (*with the benign assistance of Schulze-Delitzsch and those like him*). To fulfil a task like that it was necessary to do something altogether different from indulging in talk about belittling the spontaneous element, about the tactics-process and about the interaction between elements and environment, etc.

Proudhon and Weitling; in other words, they take part only to the extent that they are able, more or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and advance that knowledge. And in order that workingmen *may be able to do this more often*, efforts must be made to raise the level of the consciousness of the workers generally; care must be taken that the workers do not confine themselves to the artificially restricted limits of "*literature for workers*" but that they study *general literature* to an increasing degree. It would be even more true to say "are not confined," instead of "do not confine themselves," because the workers themselves wish to read and do read all that is written for the intelligentsia and it is only a few (bad) intellectuals who believe that it is sufficient "for the workers" to be told a few things about factory conditions, and to repeat over and over again what has long been known.

A desperate struggle against spontaneity had to be carried on, and only after such a struggle, extending over many years, was it possible to convert the working population of Berlin from a bulwark of the Progressive Party into one of the finest strongholds of Social-Democracy. This fight is not finished even now (as those who learn the history of the German movement from Prokopovich, and its philosophy from Struve, believe). Even now the German working class is, so to speak, broken up into a number of ideologies. A section of the workers is organized in Catholic and monarchist labour unions; another section is organized in the Hirsch-Duncker unions, founded by the bourgeois worshippers of English trade unionism, while a third section is organized in Social-Democratic trade unions. The last is immeasurably more numerous than the rest, but Social-Democracy was able to achieve this superiority, and will be able to maintain it, only by unswervingly fighting against all other ideologies.

But why, the reader will ask, does the spontaneous movement, the movement along the line of least resistance, lead to the domination of the bourgeois ideology? For the simple reason that the bourgeois ideology is far older in origin than the Socialist ideology; because it is more fully developed and because it possesses *immeasurably* more opportunities for being spread.* And the younger the Socialist movement is in any given country, the more vigorously must it fight against all attempts to entrench non-Socialist ideology, and the more strongly must it warn the workers against those bad counsellors who shout against "exaggerating the conscious elements," etc. The authors of the economic letter, in unison with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, declaim against the intolerance that is characteristic of the infancy of the movement. To this we reply: yes, our movement is indeed in its infancy, and in order that it may grow up the more quickly, it must become infected with intolerance against all those who retard its growth by subservience to spontaneity. Nothing is so ridiculous and harmful as pretending that we are "old hands" who have long ago experienced all the decisive episodes of the struggle!

Thirdly, the first number of *Rabochaya Mysl* shows that the term "Economism" (which, of course, we do not propose to abandon because this appellation has more or less established itself) does not adequately convey the real character of the new tendency. *Rabochaya Mysl* does not altogether repudiate the political struggle: the rules for a workers' benefit fund pub-

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* It is often said: the working class *spontaneously* gravitates towards Socialism. This is perfectly true in the sense that Socialist theory defines the causes of the misery of the working class more profoundly and more correctly than any other theory, and for that reason the workers are able to appreciate it so easily, *provided*, however, that this theory does not step aside for spontaneity and *provided* it subordinates spontaneity to itself. Usually this is taken for granted, but *Rabocheye Dyelo* forgets or distorts this obvious thing. The working class spontaneously gravitates towards Socialism, but the more widespread (and continuously revived in the most diverse forms) bourgeois ideology spontaneously imposes itself upon the working class still more.

lished in *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1, contains a reference to fighting against the government. *Rabochaya Mysl* believes, however, that "politics always obediently follows economics" (and *Rabocheye Dyelo* gives a variation of this thesis when, in its program, it asserts that "in Russia more than in any other country, the economic struggle is *inseparable* from the political struggle"). *If by politics is meant Social-Democratic politics*, then the postulates advanced by *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo* are absolutely wrong. The economic struggle of the workers is very often connected (although not inseparably) with bourgeois politics, clerical politics, etc., as we have already seen. If by politics is meant trade union politics, *i.e.*, the common striving of all workers to secure from the government measures for the alleviation of the distress characteristic of their position, but which do not abolish that position, *i.e.*, which do not remove the subjection of labour to capital, then *Rabocheye Dyelo's* postulate is correct. That striving indeed is common to the British trade unionists who are hostile to Socialism, to the Catholic workers, to the "Zubatov" workers, etc. There are politics and politics. Thus, we see that *Rabochaya Mysl* does not so much deny the political struggle as bow to its *spontaneity*, to its lack of consciousness. While fully recognizing the political struggle (it would be more correct to say the political desires and demands of the workers), which arises spontaneously from the labour movement itself, it absolutely refuses *independently to work out* a specifically *Social-Democratic policy* corresponding to the general tasks of Socialism and to contemporary conditions in Russia. Further on we shall show that *Rabocheye Dyelo* commits the same error.

C. The "Self-Emancipation Group" and* RABOCHEYE DYELO

We have dealt at such length with the little-known and now almost forgotten leading article in the first number of *Rabochaya Mysl* because it was the first and most striking expression of that general stream of thought which afterwards emerged into the light of day in innumerable streamlets. V. I. was absolutely right when, in praising the first number and the leading article of *Rabochaya Mysl*, he said that it was written in a "sharp and provocative" style. (*Listok Rabotnika*, No. 9-10, p. 49.) Every man with convictions who thinks he has something new to say writes "provocatively" and expresses his views strongly. Only those who are accustomed to sitting between two stools lack "provocativeness"; only such people are able to praise the provocativeness of *Rabochaya Mysl* one day, and attack the "provocative polemics" of its opponents the next.

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* The "Self-Emancipation of the Working Class Group"—a small, practically uninfluential organization of an "Economist" trend which originated in St. Petersburg at the end of 1898.—*Ed.*

We shall not dwell on the Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl* (further on we shall have occasion, on a number of points, to refer to this work, which expresses the ideas of the Economists more consistently than any other) but shall briefly mention the *Manifesto of the Self-Emancipation of the Workers Group*. (March 1899, reprinted in the London *Nakanunye* [*On the Eve*], No. 7, June 1899.) The authors of this manifesto quite rightly say that "the workers of Russia *are only just awakening*, are only just looking around, and *instinctively clutch at the first means of struggle that come to their hands*." But from this correct observation, they draw the same incorrect conclusion that is drawn by *Rabochaya Mysl*, forgetting that instinct is that unconsciousness (spontaneity) to the aid of which Socialists must come; that the "first means of struggle that come to their hands" will always be, in modern society, the trade union means of struggle, and the "first" ideology "that comes to hand" will be the bourgeois (trade union) ideology. Similarly, these authors do not "repudiate" politics, they merely say (merely!), repeating what was said by Mr. V. V., that politics is the superstructure, and therefore, "political agitation must be the superstructure to the agitation carried on in favour of the economic struggle; it must arise on the basis of this struggle and follow in its wake."

As for *Rabocheye Dyelo*, it commenced its activity by "a defence" of the Economists. It uttered a *downright falsehood* in its very first number (No. 1, pp. 141-42) when it stated that "we do not know which young comrades Axelrod referred to" in his well-known pamphlet,* in which he uttered a warning to the Economists. In the controversy that flared up with Axelrod and Plekhanov over this falsehood, *Rabocheye Dyelo* was compelled to admit that "by expressing ignorance, it desired to *defend* all the younger Social-Democrats abroad from this unjust accusation" (Axelrod accused the Economists of having a restricted outlook). As a matter of fact this accusation was absolutely just, and *Rabocheye Dyelo* knows perfectly well that, among others, it applied to V. I., a member of its editorial staff. We shall observe in passing that in this controversy Axelrod was absolutely right and *Rabocheye Dyelo* was absolutely wrong in their respective interpretations of my pamphlet *The Tasks of Russian Social-Democrats*. That pamphlet was written in 1897, before the appearance of *Rabochaya Mysl* when I thought, and rightly thought, that the *original* tendency of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, which I described above, was the predominant one. At all events, that tendency was the predominant one until the middle of 1898. Consequently, in its attempt to refute the existence and dangers of Economism, *Rabocheye Dyelo* had no right whatever to refer to a pamphlet which expressed views that were *squeezed out* by "Economist" views in St. Petersburg in 1897-98.

But *Rabocheye Dyelo not only* "defended" the Economists—it itself constantly fell into fundamental Economist errors. The cause of these errors

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* *The Contemporary Tasks and Tactics of the Russian Social-Democrats*, Geneva, 1898. Two letters written to *Rabochaya Gazeta* in 1897.

is to be found in the ambiguity of the interpretation given to the following thesis in *Rabocheye Dyelo's* program: "We consider that the most important phenomenon of Russian life, the one that will mostly *determine the tasks* [our italics] and the character of the literary activity of the Union, is the *mass labour movement* [*Rabocheye Dyelo's* italics] that has arisen in recent years." That the mass movement is a most important phenomenon is a fact about which there can be no dispute. But the crux of the question is, what is the meaning of the phrase: the mass labour movement will "determine the tasks"? It may be interpreted in one of two ways. *Either* it means worshipping the spontaneity of this movement, *i.e.*, reducing the role of Social-Democracy to mere subservience to the labour movement as such (the interpretation given to it by *Rabochaya Mysl*, the "Self-Emancipation Group" and other Economists); *or* it may mean that the mass movement puts before us *new*, theoretical, political and organizational tasks, far more complicated than those that might have satisfied us in the period before the rise of the mass movement. *Rabocheye Dyelo* inclined and still inclines towards the first interpretation, for it said nothing definitely about new tasks, but argued all the time as if the "mass movement" *relieved* us of the necessity of clearly appreciating and fulfilling the tasks it sets before us. We need only point out that *Rabocheye Dyelo* considered that it was impossible to set the overthrow of the autocracy as the *first* task of the mass labour movement, and that it degraded this task (ostensibly in the interests of the mass movement) to the struggle for immediate political demands. (*Reply*, p. 25.)

We shall pass over the article by B. Krichevsky, the editor of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, entitled "The Economic and Political Struggle in the Russian Movement," published in No. 7 of that paper, in which these very mistakes* are

* The "stages theory," or the theory of "timid zigzags" in the political struggle, is expressed in this article approximately in the following way: "Political demands, which in their character are common to the whole of Russia, should, however, at first [this was written in August 1900!] correspond to the experience gained by the given stratum [*sic*!] of workers in the economic struggle. Only [!] on the basis of this experience can and should political agitation be taken up," etc. (P. 11.) On page 4, the author, protesting against what he regards as the absolutely unfounded charge of Economist heresy, pathetically exclaims: "What Social-Democrat does not know that according to the theories of Marx and Engels the economic interests of various classes are the decisive factors in history, and, *consequently*, that the proletariat's struggle for the defence of its economic interests must be of first-rate importance in its class development and struggle for emancipation?" (Our italics.) The word "consequently" is absolutely out of place. The fact that economic interests are a decisive factor *does not in the least imply* that the economic (*i.e.*, trade union) struggle must be the main factor, for the essential and "decisive" interests of classes can be satisfied *only* by radical *political* changes in general. In particular the fundamental economic interests of the proletariat can be satisfied only by a political revolution that will substitute the dictatorship of the proletariat for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. B. Krichevsky repeats the arguments of the "V.V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy" (*i.e.*, politics follow economics, etc.) and the Bernsteinians of German Social-Democracy (for example by arguments like these, Woltmann tried to prove

repeated, and take up *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10. We shall not, of course, enter in detail into the various objections raised by B. Krichevsky and Martynov against *Zarya* and *Iskra*. What interests us here solely is the theoretical position taken up by *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10. For example, we shall not examine the literary curiosity—that *Rabocheye Dyelo* saw a "diametrical contradiction" between the proposition:

> "Social-Democracy does not tie its hands, it does not restrict its activities to some preconceived plan or method of political struggle; it recognizes all methods of struggle, as long as they correspond to the forces at the disposal of the Party...." (*Iskra*, No. 1*)
> and the proposition:
> "without a strong organization, tested in the political struggle carried on under all circumstances and in all periods, there can be no talk of a systematic plan of activity, enlightened by firm principles and unswervingly carried out, which alone is worthy of being called tactics." (*Iskra*, No. 4.**)

To confuse the recognition, *in principle*, of all means of struggle, of all plans and methods, as long as they are expedient—with the necessity *at a given political moment* for being guided by a strictly adhered-to plan, if we are to talk of tactics, is tantamount to confusing the recognition by medical science of all kinds of treatment of diseases with the necessity for adopting a certain definite method of treatment for a given disease. The point is, however, that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, while suffering from a disease which we have called worshipping spontaneity, refuses to recognize any "method of treatment" for *that* disease. Hence, it made the remarkable discovery that a "tactics-as-a-plan contradicts the fundamental spirit of Marxism" (No. 10, p. 18), that tactics are *"a process of growth of Party tasks, which grow with the Party."* (P. 11, *Rabocheye Dyelo's* italics.) The latter remark has every chance of becoming a celebrated maxim, a permanent monument to the "tendency" of *Rabocheye Dyelo*. To the question: *whither?* a leading organ replies: movement is a process altering the distance between the starting point and the subsequent stages of the movement. This matchless example of profundity is not merely a literary curiosity (if it were, it would not be worth dealing with at length), but *the program of the whole tendency, i.e.*, the program which R. M. (in the Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl*) expressed in the words: "That struggle is desirable which is possible, and the struggle which is possible is the one that is going on at the given moment." It is the tendency of unbounded opportunism. which passively adapts itself to spontaneity.

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that the workers must first of all acquire "economic power" before they can think about political revolution).

* See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol II, p. 14—"The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement."—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, p. 16—"Where To Begin?"—*Ed.*

A "tactics-as-a-plan contradicts the fundamental spirit of Marxism." this is a libel on Marxism; it is like the caricature of it that was presei to us by the Narodniks in their fight against us. It means putting restr on the initiative and energy of class-conscious fighters, whereas Marxism, the contrary, gives a gigantic impetus to the initiative and energy of Soc Democrats, opens up for them the widest perspectives and, if one may express it, places at their disposal the mighty force of millions and r lions of workers "spontaneously" rising for the struggle. The whole hist of international Social-Democracy seethes with plans advanced first by and then by another political leader; some confirming the far-sightedn and correct political and organizational insight of their authors and oth revealing their shortsightedness and lack of political judgment. At the ti when Germany was at one of the most important turning points in history, the time of the establishment of the Empire, the opening of Reichstag and the granting of universal suffrage, Liebknecht had one p for Social-Democratic policy and work and Schweitzer had another. Wl the Anti-Socialist Law came down on the heads of the German Sociali Most and Hasselmann had one plan, that is, to call for violence and terr Höchberg, Schramm and (partly) Bernstein had another, which they beg to preach to the Social-Democrats, somewhat as follows: they themsel had provoked the passing of the Anti-Socialist Law by being unreasona bitter and revolutionary, and must now show that they deserve pardon exemplary conduct. There was yet a third plan proposed by those w paved the way for and carried out the publication of an illegal org It is easy, of course, in retrospect, many years after the fight over selection of the path to be followed has ended, and after history has p nounced its verdict as to the expediency of the path selected, to ut profound maxims about the growth of Party tasks that grow with the Par But at a time of confusion,* when the Russian "critics" and Economi degrade Social-Democracy to the level of trade unionism, and when the t rorists are strongly advocating the adoption of a "tactics-as-a-plan" th repeats the old mistakes, at such a time, to confine oneself to such profu dities, means simply issuing oneself a "certificate of mental poverty." a time when many Russian Social-Democrats suffer from lack of initiati and energy, from a lack of "scope of political propaganda, agitation an organization,"** a lack of "plans" for a broader organization of revol tionary work, at such a time, to say: a "tactics-as-a-plan contradicts t fundamental spirit of Marxism," not only means theoretically vulgarizi

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* *Ein Jahr der Verwirrung* [*A Year of Confusion*] is the title Mehring gave the chapter of his *History of German Social-Democracy* in which he describes t hesitancy and lack of determination displayed at first by the Socialists in selecti the "tactics-as-a-plan" for the new situation.

** Leading article in *Iskra*, No. 1, "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement," s Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II, p. 12.—*Ed.*

Marxism, but also practically *dragging the Party backward. Rabocheye Dyelo* goes on sermonizing:

> "The revolutionary Social-Democrat is only confronted by the task of accelerating objective development by his conscious work; it is not his task to obviate it or substitute his own subjective plans for this development. *Iskra* knows all this in theory. But the enormous importance which Marxism quite justly attaches to conscious revolutionary work causes it in practice, owing to its doctrinaire view of tactics, to *belittle the significance of the objective or the spontaneous element of development.*" (P. 18.)

Another example of the extraordinary theoretical confusion worthy of Mr. V. V. and that fraternity. We would ask our philosopher: how may a deviser of subjective plans "belittle" objective development? Obviously by losing sight of the fact that this objective development creates or strengthens, destroys or weakens certain classes, strata, groups, nations, groups of nations, etc., and in this way creates a definite international political grouping of forces, determining the position of revolutionary parties, etc. If the deviser of plans did that, his mistake would not be that he belittled the spontaneous element, but that he belittled the *conscious element*, for he would then show that he lacked the "consciousness" that would enable him properly to understand objective development. Hence, the very talk about "estimating the *relative* significance" (*Rabocheye Dyelo's* italics) of spontaneity and consciousness sufficiently reveals a complete lack of "consciousness." If certain "spontaneous elements of development" can be grasped at all by human understanding, then an incorrect estimation of them would be tantamount to "belittling the conscious element." But if they cannot be grasped, then we cannot be aware of them, and therefore cannot speak of them. What is B. Krichevsky arguing about then? If he thinks that *Iskra's* "subjective plans" are erroneous (as he in fact declares them to be), then he ought to show what objective facts are ignored in these plans, and then charge *Iskra* with *a lack of consciousness* for ignoring them, with, to use his own words, "belittling the conscious element." If, however, while being displeased with subjective plans he can bring forward no other argument than that of "belittling the spontaneous element" (!!) he merely shows: 1) that he theoretically understands Marxism *à la* Kareyevs and Mikhailovskys, who have been sufficiently ridiculed by Beltov,* and 2) that, practically, he is quite pleased with the "spontaneous elements of development" that have drawn our "legal Marxists" towards Bernsteinism and our Social-Democrats towards Economism, and that he is full of wrath against those who have determined at all costs to *divert* Russian Social-Democracy from the path of "spontaneous" development.

Rabocheye Dyelo accuses *Iskra* and *Zarya* of "setting up their program

* The pseudonym of Plekhanov.—*Ed.*

against the movement, like a spirit hovering over the formless chaos." (P. 29.) But what else is the function of Social-Democracy if not to be a "spirit," not only hovering over the spontaneous movement, but also *raising* the movement *to the level of "its program"*? Surely, it is not its function to drag at the *tail* of the movement: at best, this would be of no service to the movement; at the worst, it would be very, very harmful. *Rabocheye Dyelo*, however, not only follows this "tactics-as-a-process," but elevates it to a principle, so that it would be more correct to describe its tendency not as opportunism, but as *khvostism* (from the word *khvost**). And it must be admitted that those who have determined always to follow behind the movement like a tail are absolutely and forever ensured against "belittling the spontaneous element of development."

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And so, we have become convinced that the fundamental error committed by the "new tendency" in Russian Social-Democracy lies in its subservience to spontaneity, and its failure to understand that the spontaneity of the masses demands a mass of consciousness from us Social-Democrats. The greater the spontaneous upsurge of the masses, the more widespread the movement becomes, so much the more rapidly grows the demand for greater consciousness in the theoretical, political and organizational work of Social-Democracy.

The spontaneous upsurge of the masses in Russia proceeded (and continues) with such rapidity that the young untrained Social-Democrats proved unfitted for the gigantic tasks that confronted them. This lack of training is our common misfortune, the misfortune of *all* Russian Social-Democrats. The upsurge of the masses proceeded and spread uninterruptedly and continuously; it not only continued in the places it began, but spread to new localities and to new strata of the population (influenced by the labour movement, the ferment among the students, the intellectuals generally and even among the peasantry revived). Revolutionaries, however, *lagged behind* this upsurge of the masses both in their "theories" and in their practical activity; they failed to establish an uninterrupted organization having continuity with the past, and capable of *leading* the whole movement.

In Chapter I, we proved that *Rabocheye Dyelo* degraded our theoretical tasks and that it "spontaneously" repeated the fashionable catchword "freedom of criticism": that those who repeated this catchword lacked the "consciousness" to understand that the positions of the opportunist "critics" and the revolutionaries, in Germany and in Russia, are diametrically opposed to each other.

In the following chapters, we shall show how this worship of spontaneity found expression in the sphere of the political tasks and the organizational work of Social-Democracy.

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* *Khvost*—the Russian for tail.—*Ed.*

III

TRADE UNION POLITICS AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

We shall start off again by praising *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Martynov gave his article in No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, on his differences with *Iskra*, the title "Exposure Literature and the Proletarian Struggle." He formulated the substance of these differences as follows:

> "We cannot confine ourselves entirely to exposing the system that stands in its [the labour party's] path of development. We must also respond to the immediate and current interests of the proletariat." "...*Iskra* ... is in fact the organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs.... We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of labour in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." (P. 63.)

One cannot help being grateful to Martynov for this formula. It is of outstanding general interest because substantially it embraces not only our disagreements with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but the general disagreement between ourselves and the "Economists" concerning the political struggle. We have already shown that the "Economists" do not altogether repudiate "politics," but that they are constantly deviating from the Social-Democratic conception of politics to the trade unionist conception. Martynov deviates in exactly the same way, and we agree, therefore, to take his views as an *example* of Economist error on this question. As we shall endeavour to prove, neither the authors of the Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl*, nor the authors of the manifesto issued by the "Self-Emancipation Group," nor the authors of the Economist letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, will have any right to complain against this choice.

A. Political Agitation and Its Restriction by the Economists

Everyone knows that the spread and consolidation of the economic* struggle of the Russian workers proceeded simultaneously with the creation of a "literature" exposing economic conditions, *i.e.*, factory and industrial conditions. These "leaflets" were devoted mainly to the exposure of factory conditions, and very soon a passion for exposures was roused among the workers. As soon as the workers realized that the Social-Democratic circles

* In order to avoid misunderstanding we deem it necessary to state that by economic struggle, here and throughout this pamphlet, we mean (in accordance with the meaning of the term as it has become accepted among us) the "practical economic struggle" which Engels, in the passage quoted above, described as "resistance to capitalists," and which in free countries is known as the trade union struggle.

desired to and could supply them with a new kind of leaflet that told the whole truth about their poverty-stricken lives, about their excessive toil and their lack of rights, correspondence began to pour in from the factories and workshops. This "exposure-literature" created a huge sensation not only in the particular factory dealt with, the conditions of which were exposed in a given leaflet, but in all the factories to which news had spread about the facts exposed. And as the poverty and want among the workers in the various enterprises and in the various trades are pretty much the same, the "truth about the life of the workers" roused the admiration *of all.* Even among the most backward workers, a veritable passion was roused to "go into print"—a noble passion for this rudimentary form of war against the whole of the modern social system which is based upon robbery and oppression. And in the overwhelming majority of cases these "leaflets" were in truth a declaration of war, because the exposures had a terrifically rousing effect upon the workers; it stimulated them to put forward common demands for the removal of the most glaring evils and roused in them a readiness to support these demands with strikes. Finally, the employers themselves were compelled to recognize the significance of these leaflets as a declaration of war, so much so that in a large number of cases they did not even wait for the outbreak of hostilities. As is always the case, the mere publication of these exposures made them effective, and they acquired the significance of a strong moral force. On more than one occasion, the mere appearance of a leaflet proved sufficient to secure the satisfaction of all or part of the demands put forward. In a word, economic (factory) exposures have been and are an important lever in the economic struggle and they will continue to be such as long as capitalism, which creates the need for the workers to defend themselves, exists. Even in the most advanced countries of Europe today, the exposure of the evils in some backward trade, or in some forgotten branch of domestic industry, serves as a starting point for the awakening of class consciousness, for the beginning of a trade union struggle, and for the spread of Socialism.*

Recently, the overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats were

* In the present chapter, we deal only with the *political* struggle, whether it is to be understood in its broader or narrower sense. Therefore, we refer only in passing, merely to point out a curiosity, to the accusation that *Rabocheye Dyelo* hurls against *Iskra* of being "too restrained" in regard to the economic struggle. (*Two Congresses,* p. 27, rehashed by Martynov in his pamphlet *Social-Democracy and the Working Class.*) If those who make this accusation counted up in terms of hundredweights or reams, as they are so fond of doing, what has been said about the economic struggle in the industrial column of *Iskra* in one year's issue, and compared this with the industrial columns of *Rabocheye Dyelo* and *Rabochaya Mysl* taken together, they would see that they lag very much behind even in this respect. Apparently, the consciousness of this simple truth compels them to resort to arguments which clearly reveal their confusion. "*Iskra,*" they write, "willy-nilly [!] is compelled [!] to take note of the imperative demands of life and to publish at least [!!] correspondence about the labour movement." (*Two Congresses,* p. 27.) Now this is really a crushing argument!

III

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We shall start off again by praising *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Martynov gave his article in No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, on his differences with *Iskra*, the title "Exposure Literature and the Proletarian Struggle." He formulated the substance of these differences as follows:

> "We cannot confine ourselves entirely to exposing the system that stands in its [the labour party's] path of development. We must also respond to the immediate and current interests of the proletariat." "...*Iskra* ... is in fact the organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs.... We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of labour in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." (P. 63.)

One cannot help being grateful to Martynov for this formula. It is of outstanding general interest because substantially it embraces not only our disagreements with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but the general disagreement between ourselves and the "Economists" concerning the political struggle. We have already shown that the "Economists" do not altogether repudiate "politics," but that they are constantly deviating from the Social-Democratic conception of politics to the trade unionist conception. Martynov deviates in exactly the same way, and we agree, therefore, to take his views as an *example* of Economist error on this question. As we shall endeavour to prove, neither the authors of the Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl*, nor the authors of the manifesto issued by the "Self-Emancipation Group," nor the authors of the Economist letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, will have any right to complain against this choice.

A. Political Agitation and Its Restriction by the Economists

Everyone knows that the spread and consolidation of the economic* struggle of the Russian workers proceeded simultaneously with the creation of a "literature" exposing economic conditions, *i.e.*, factory and industrial conditions. These "leaflets" were devoted mainly to the exposure of factory conditions, and very soon a passion for exposures was roused among the workers. As soon as the workers realized that the Social-Democratic circles

* In order to avoid misunderstanding we deem it necessary to state that by economic struggle, here and throughout this pamphlet, we mean (in accordance with the meaning of the term as it has become accepted among us) the "practical economic struggle" which Engels, in the passage quoted above, described as "resistance to capitalists," and which in free countries is known as the trade union struggle.

desired to and could supply them with a new kind of leaflet that told the whole truth about their poverty-stricken lives, about their excessive toil and their lack of rights, correspondence began to pour in from the factories and workshops. This "exposure-literature" created a huge sensation not only in the particular factory dealt with, the conditions of which were exposed in a given leaflet, but in all the factories to which news had spread about the facts exposed. And as the poverty and want among the workers in the various enterprises and in the various trades are pretty much the same, the "truth about the life of the workers" roused the admiration *of all*. Even among the most backward workers, a veritable passion was roused to "go into print"—a noble passion for this rudimentary form of war against the whole of the modern social system which is based upon robbery and oppression. And in the overwhelming majority of cases these "leaflets" were in truth a declaration of war, because the exposures had a terrifically rousing effect upon the workers; it stimulated them to put forward common demands for the removal of the most glaring evils and roused in them a readiness to support these demands with strikes. Finally, the employers themselves were compelled to recognize the significance of these leaflets as a declaration of war, so much so that in a large number of cases they did not even wait for the outbreak of hostilities. As is always the case, the mere publication of these exposures made them effective, and they acquired the significance of a strong moral force. On more than one occasion, the mere appearance of a leaflet proved sufficient to secure the satisfaction of all or part of the demands put forward. In a word, economic (factory) exposures have been and are an important lever in the economic struggle and they will continue to be such as long as capitalism, which creates the need for the workers to defend themselves, exists. Even in the most advanced countries of Europe today, the exposure of the evils in some backward trade, or in some forgotten branch of domestic industry, serves as a starting point for the awakening of class consciousness, for the beginning of a trade union struggle, and for the spread of Socialism.*

Recently, the overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats were

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* In the present chapter, we deal only with the *political* struggle, whether it is to be understood in its broader or narrower sense. Therefore, we refer only in passing, merely to point out a curiosity, to the accusation that *Rabocheye Dyelo* hurls against *Iskra* of being "too restrained" in regard to the economic struggle. (*Two Congresses*, p. 27, rehashed by Martynov in his pamphlet *Social-Democracy and the Working Class.*) If those who make this accusation counted up in terms of hundredweights or reams, as they are so fond of doing, what has been said about the economic struggle in the industrial column of *Iskra* in one year's issue, and compared this with the industrial columns of *Rabocheye Dyelo* and *Rabochaya Mysl* taken together, they would see that they lag very much behind even in this respect. Apparently, the consciousness of this simple truth compels them to resort to arguments which clearly reveal their confusion. "*Iskra*," they write, "willy-nilly [!] is compelled [!] to take note of the imperative demands of life and to publish at least [!!] correspondence about the labour movement." (*Two Congresses*, p. 27.) Now this is really a crushing argument!

almost wholly *engaged in this work of organizing the exposure of factory* conditions. It is sufficient to refer to the columns of *Rabochaya Mysl* to judge to what extent they were engaged in it. So much so, indeed, that they lost sight of the fact that this, *taken by itself*, is not in essence Social-Democratic work, but merely trade union work. As a matter of fact, these exposures merely dealt with the relations between the workers *in a given trade* and their immediate employers, and all that they achieved was that the vendors of labour power learned to sell their "commodity" on better terms and to fight the purchasers of labour power over a purely commercial deal. These exposures could have served (if properly utilized by an organization of revolutionaries) as a beginning and a constituent part of Social-Democratic activity, but they could also have led (and given a worshipful attitude towards spontaneity were bound to lead) to a "pure and simple" trade union struggle and to a non-Social-Democratic labour movement. Social-Democrats lead the struggle of the working class not only for better terms for the sale of labour power, but also for the abolition of the social system which compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class, not in relation to a given group of employers, but in its relation to all classes in modern society, to the state as an organized political force. Hence, it not only follows that Social-Democrats must not confine themselves entirely to the economic struggle; they must not even allow the organization of economic exposures to become the predominant part of their activities. We must actively take up the political education of the working class and the development of its political consciousness. *Now*, after *Zarya* and *Iskra* have made the first attack upon Economism "all are agreed" on this (although some agreed only nominally, as we shall soon prove).

The question now arises: what must political education consist of? Is it sufficient to confine oneself to the propaganda of working-class hostility to the autocracy? Of course not. It is not enough to *explain* to the workers that they are politically oppressed (no more than it was to *explain* to them that their interests were antagonistic to the interests of the employers). Advantage must be taken of every concrete example of this oppression for the purpose of agitation (in the same way that we began to use concrete examples of economic oppression for the purpose of agitation). And inasmuch as *political* oppression affects all sorts of classes in society, inasmuch as it manifests itself in various spheres of life and activity, industrial, civic, personal, family, religious, scientific, etc., etc., is it not evident that *we shall not be fulfilling our task* of developing the political consciousness of the workers if we do not *undertake* the organization of the *political exposure* of the autocracy *in all its aspects*? In order to carry on agitation around concrete examples of oppression, these examples must be exposed (just as it was necessary to expose factory evils in order to carry on economic agitation).

One would think that this was clear enough. It turns out, however, that

"all" are agreed that it is necessary to develop political consciousness, *in all its aspects*, only in words. It turns out that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, for example, has not only failed to take up the task of organizing (or to make a start in organizing) all-sided political exposure, but is even trying to *drag Iskra*, which has undertaken this task, *away from it*. Listen to this: "The political struggle of the working class is merely [it is precisely not "merely"] the most developed, widest and most effective form of economic struggle." (Program of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, published in No. 1, p. 3.) "The Social-Democrats are now confronted with the task of, as far as possible, lending the economic struggle itself a political character." (Martynov, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 42.) "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable method of drawing the masses into active political struggle." (Resolution passed by the Congress of the Union and "amendments" thereto, *Two Congresses*, pp. 11 and 17.) As the reader will observe, all these postulates permeate *Rabocheye Dyelo*, from its very first number to the latest "Instructions to the Editors," and all of them evidently express a single view regarding political agitation and the political struggle. Examine this view from the standpoint of the opinion prevailing among all Economists, that political agitation must *follow* economic agitation. Is it true that, in general,* the economic struggle "is the most widely applicable method" of drawing the masses into the political struggle? It is absolutely untrue. *All and sundry* manifestations of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, in addition to the evils connected with the economic struggle, are equally "widely applicable" as a means of "drawing in" the masses. The tyranny of the Zemsky Nachalniks,** the flogging of the peasantry, the corruption of the officials, the conduct of the police towards the "common people" in the cities, the fight against the famine-stricken and the suppression of the popular striving towards enlightenment and knowledge, the extortion of taxes, the persecution of the religious sects, the harsh discipline in the army, the militarist conduct towards the students and the liberal intelligentsia—all these and a thousand other similar manifestations of tyranny, though not directly connected with the "economic" struggle, do they, in general, represent a *less* "widely applicable" method and subject for political agitation and for

* We say "in general," because *Rabocheye Dyelo* speaks of general principles and of the general tasks of the whole Party. Undoubtedly, cases occur in practice, when politics *must* follow economics, but only Economists can say a thing like that in a resolution that was intended to apply to the whole of Russia. Cases do occur when *it is possible* "right from the beginning" to carry on political agitation "exclusively on an economic basis"; and yet *Rabocheye Dyelo* went so far as to say that "there is no need for this whatever." (*Two Congresses*, p. 11.) In the next chapter, we shall show that the tactics of the "politicians" and revolutionaries not only do not ignore the trade union tasks of Social-Democracy, but that, on the contrary, they alone *can secure* the consistent fulfilment of these tasks.

** *Zemsky Nachalniks* (*Zemstvo Chiefs*) were government officials appointed from among the local landowners and noblemen, who exercised administrative and judicial authority in the countryside. The office was instituted in 1889 and came to an end with the overthrow of the tsar.—*Ed.*

drawing the masses into the political struggle? The very opposite is the case. Of all the innumerable cases in which the workers suffer (either personally or those closely associated with them) from tyranny, violence and lack of rights, undoubtedly only a relatively few represent cases of police tyranny in the economic struggle as such. Why then should we, beforehand, *restrict* the scope of political agitation by declaring only *one* of the methods to be "the most widely applicable," when Social-Democrats have other, generally speaking, no less "widely applicable" means?

The Union attaches significance to the fact that it replaced the phrase "most widely applicable method" by the phrase "a better method" contained in one of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Jewish Labour League (Bund). We confess that we find it difficult to say which of these resolutions is the better one. In our opinion *both are "worse."* Both the Union and the Bund fall into the error (partly, perhaps, unconsciously, owing to the influence of tradition) of giving an economic, trade unionist interpretation to politics. The fact that this error is expressed either by the word "better" or by words "most widely applicable" makes no material difference whatever. If the Union had said that "political agitation on an economic basis" is the most widely applied (and not "applicable") method it would have been right in regard to a certain period in the development of our Social-Democratic movement. It would have been right in regard to the *Economists* and to many (if not the majority) of the practical workers of 1898-1901 who *applied* the method of political agitation (to the extent that they applied it at all!) *almost exclusively on an economic basis.* Political agitation on *such* lines was recognized and, as we have seen, even recommended by *Rabochaya Mysl* and by the "Self-Emancipation Group"! *Rabocheye Dyelo* should have *strongly condemned* the fact that useful economic agitation was accompanied by the harmful restriction of the political struggle, but instead of that, it declares the method most widely *applied* (*by the Economists*) to be the most widely *applicable*!

What real concrete meaning does Martynov attach to the words "lending the economic struggle itself a political character," in presenting the tasks of Social-Democracy? The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers against their employers for better terms *in the sale of their labour power*, for better conditions of life and labour. This struggle is necessarily a struggle according to trade, because conditions of labour differ very much in different trades, and, consequently, the fight to *improve* these conditions can only be conducted in respect of each trade (trade unions in the western countries, temporary trade associations and leaflets in Russia, etc.). Lending "the economic struggle itself a political character" means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction for these trade demands, the improvement of conditions of labour in each separate trade by means of "legislative and administrative measures" (as Martynov expresses it on the next page of his article, p. 43). This is exactly what the trade unions do and always have done. Read the works of the thoroughly scientific (and

"thoroughly" opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will find that the British trade unions long ago recognized and have long carried out, the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all legal hindrances to the co-operative and trade union movement, for laws protecting women and children, for the improvement of conditions of labour by means of health and factory legislation, etc.

Thus, the pompous phrase "lending the economic struggle *itself* a political character," which sounds so "terrifically" profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade union politics! On the pretext of rectifying *Iskra's* one-sidedness, which, it is alleged, places "the revolutionizing of dogma higher than the revolutionizing of life,"* we are presented with the *struggle for economic reform* as if it were something entirely new. As a matter of fact, the phrase "lending the economic struggle itself a political character" means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. And Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion had he only pondered over the significance of his own words.

> "Our Party," he says, turning his heaviest guns against *Iskra*, "could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, for the relief of unemployment, for the relief of the famine-stricken, etc." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42-43.)

Concrete demands for measures—does not this mean demands for social reforms? And again we ask the impartial reader, do we slander the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (may I be forgiven for this clumsy expression!), when we declare them to be concealed Bernsteinites for advancing their thesis about the necessity of fighting for economic reforms as their point of *disagreement* with *Iskra*?

Revolutionary Social-Democracy always included, and now includes, the fight for reforms in its activities. But it utilizes "economic" agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it cease to be an autocratic government. Moreover, it considers it to be its duty to present this demand to the government, not on the basis of the economic struggle *alone*, but on the basis of all manifestations of public and political life. In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms to the revolutionary struggle for liberty and for Socialism, as the part is subordinate to the whole. Martynov, however, resuscitates the theory of stages in a new form, and strives

* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 60. This is the Martynov variation of the application to the present chaotic state of our movement of the thesis: "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs," to which we have already referred above. As a matter of fact, this is merely a translation into Russian of the notorious Bernsteinian phrase: "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing."

to prescribe an exclusively economic, so to speak, path of development for the political struggle. By coming out at this moment, when the revolutionary movement is on the up-grade, with an alleged special "task" of fighting for reforms, he is dragging the Party backwards and is playing into the hands of both "economic" and liberal opportunism.

To proceed. Shamefacedly hiding the struggle for reforms behind the pompous thesis "lending the economic struggle itself a political character," Martynov advanced, as if it were a special point *exclusively economic* (in fact exclusively factory) *reforms*. Why he did that, we do not know. Perhaps it was due to carelessness? But if, indeed, he had something else besides "factory" reforms in mind, then the whole of his thesis, which we have just quoted, loses all sense. Perhaps he did it because he thought it possible and probable that the government would make "concessions" only in the economic sphere?* If that is what he thought, then it is a strange error. Concessions are also possible and are made in the sphere of legislation concerning flogging, passports, land compensation payments, religious sects, the censorship, etc., etc. "Economic" concessions (or pseudo-concessions) are, of course, the cheapest and most advantageous concessions to make from the government's point of view, because by these means it hopes to win the confidence of the masses of the workers. For this very reason, we Social-Democrats *must under no circumstances* create grounds for the belief (or the misunderstanding) that we attach greater value to economic reforms, or that we regard them as being particularly important, etc. "Such demands," writes Martynov, concerning the concrete demands for legislative and administrative measures referred to above, "would not be merely a hollow sound, because, promising certain palpable results, they might be actively supported by the masses of the workers...." We are not Economists, oh no! We only cringe as slavishly before the "palpableness" of concrete results as do the Bernsteins, the Prokopoviches, the Struves, the R.M.'s, and *tutti quanti*! We only wish to make it understood (with Narcissus Tuporylov)** that all that which "does not promise palpable results" is merely a "hollow sound." We are only trying to argue as if the masses of the workers were incapable (and had not already proved their capabilities, notwithstanding those who ascribe their own philistinism to them) of actively supporting *every* protest against the autocracy even if it *promises absolutely no palpable results whatever*!

> "In addition to its immediate revolutionary significance, the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government ["*economic* struggle against the government"!!] has also this signifi-

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* P. 43 "Of course, when we advise the workers to present certain economic demands to the government, we do so because in the *economic* sphere, the autocratic government is compelled to agree to make certain concessions."

** Narcissus Tuporylov—the pseudonym used by Martov to sign a satirical hymn directed against the Economists.—*Ed.*

> cance: that it constantly brings the workers face to face with their own lack of political rights." (Martynov, p. 44.)

We quote this passage not in order to repeat what has already been said hundreds and thousands of times before, but in order to thank Martynov for this excellent new formula: "the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government." What a pearl! With what inimitable talent and skill in eliminating all partial disagreements and shades of differences among Economists does this clear and concise postulate express the *quintessence* of Economism: from calling to the workers to join "in the political struggle which they carry on in the general interest, for the purpose of improving the conditions of all the workers,"* continuing through the theory of stages, to the resolution of the Congress on the "most widely applicable," etc. "Economic struggle against the government" is precisely trade union politics, which is very, very far from being Social-Democratic politics.

B. A Tale of How Martynov Rendered Plekhanov More Profound

Martynov says:

> "Much water has flowed under the bridges since Plekhanov wrote this book." (*Tasks of the Socialists in the Fight Against the Famine in Russia.*) "The Social-Democrats who for a decade led the economic struggle of the working class ... have failed as yet to lay down a broad theoretical basis for Party tactics. This question has now come to the fore, and if we should wish to lay down such a theoretical basis we would certainly have to deepen considerably the principles of tactics that Plekhanov at one time developed.... We would now have to define the differences between propaganda and agitation differently from the way in which Plekhanov defined it. [Martynov had just previously quoted the words of Plekhanov: "A propagandist presents many ideas to one or a few persons; an agitator presents only one or a few ideas, but he presents them to a mass of people."] By propaganda we would understand the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it, irrespective of whether it is done in a form capable of being understood by individuals or by broad masses. By agitation, in the strict sense of the word [*sic*!], we would understand calling the masses to certain concrete actions that would facilitate the direct revolutionary intervention of the proletariat in social life."

We congratulate Russian and international Social-Democracy on Martynov's new, more strict and more profound terminology. Up to now we

* *Rabochaya Mysl,* Special Supplement, p. 14.

thought (with Plekhanov, and with all the leaders of the internation labour movement) that a propagandist, dealing with, say, the question unemployment, must explain the capitalistic nature of crises, the reasor why crises are inevitable in modern society, must describe how present sc ciety must inevitably become transformed into Socialist society, etc. In word, he must present "many ideas," so many indeed that they will b understood as a whole only by a (comparatively) few persons. An agitato: however, *speaking on the same subject will take as an illustration a fac* that is most widely known and outstanding among his audience, say, th death from starvation of the family of an unemployed worker, the growin impoverishment, etc., and utilizing this fact, which is known to all an sundry, will direct all his efforts to presenting *a single idea* to the "mass es," *i.e.*, the idea of the senseless contradiction between the increase o wealth and increase of poverty; he will strive to *rouse* discontent and in dignation among the masses against this crying injustice, and leave a mor complete explanation of this contradiction to the propagandist. Consequently *the propagandist operates chiefly by means of the printed* word; the agitator operates with the *living* word. The qualities that are required of an agitator are not the same as the qualities that are required of a propagandist. Kautsky and Lafargue, for example, we call propagandists; Bebel and Guesde we call agitators. To single out a third sphere, or third function, of practical activity, and to include in this third function "calling the masses to certain concrete actions," is sheer nonsense, because the "call," as a single act, either naturally and inevitably supplements the theoretical tract, propagandist pamphlet and agitational speech, or represents a purely executive function. Take, for example, the struggle now being carried on by the German Social-Democrats against the grain duties. The theoreticians write works of research on tariff policy and "call," say, for a fight for commercial treaties and for free trade. The propagandist does the same thing in the periodical press, and the agitator does it in public speeches. At the present time, the "concrete action" of the masses takes the form of signing petitions to the Reichstag against the raising of the grain duties. The call for this action comes indirectly from the theoreticians, the propagandists and the agitators, and, directly, from those workers who carry the petition lists to the factories and to private houses to get signatures. According to the "Martynov terminology," Kautsky and Bebel are both propagandists, while those who carry the petition lists around are agitators; is that not so?

The German example recalled to my mind the German word *Verballhornung*, which literally translated means "to Ballhorn." Johann Ballhorn, a Leipzig publisher of the sixteenth century, published a child's reader in which, as was the custom, he introduced a drawing of a cock; but this drawing, instead of portraying an ordinary cock with spurs, portrayed it without spurs and with a couple of eggs lying near it. On the cover of this reader he printed the legend "*Revised* edition by Johann Ballhorn." Since that time the Germans describe any "revision" that is really a worsening as

"Ballhorning." And watching Martynov's attempts to render Plekhanov "more profound" involuntarily recalls Ballhorn to one's mind....

Why did Martynov "invent" this confusion? In order to illustrate how *Iskra* "devotes attention only to one side of the case, just as Plekhanov did a decade and a half ago" (p. 39). "According to *Iskra*, propagandist tasks force agitational tasks into the background, at least for the present" (p. 52). If we translate this last postulate from the language of Martynov into ordinary human language (because humanity has not yet managed to learn the newly invented terminology), we shall get the following: "According to *Iskra* the tasks of political propaganda and political agitation force into the background the task of 'presenting to the government concrete demands for legislative and administrative measures' that 'promise certain palpable results'" (or demands for social reforms, that is, if we are permitted just once again to employ the old terminology of old humanity, which has not yet grown to Martynov's level). We suggest that the reader compare this thesis with the following tirade:

> "What astonishes us in these programs [the programs advanced by revolutionary Social-Democrats] is the constant stress that is laid upon the benefits of labour activity in parliament (non-existent in Russia) and the manner in which (thanks to their revolutionary nihilism) the importance of workers participating in the Government Advisory Committees on Factory Affairs (which do exist in Russia) ... or at least the importance of workers participating in municipal bodies is completely ignored...."

The author of this tirade expresses somewhat more straightforwardly, more clearly and frankly, the very idea which Martynov discovered himself. This author is R. M. in the Special Supplement to *Rabochaya Mysl*. (P. 15.)

C. Political Exposures and "Training in Revolutionary Activity"

In advancing against *Iskra* his "theory" of "raising the activity of the masses of the workers," Martynov, as a matter of fact, displayed a striving to *diminish* this activity, because he declared the very economic struggle before which all Economists grovel to be the preferable, the most important and "the most widely applicable" means of rousing this activity, and the widest field for it. This error is such a characteristic one, precisely because it is not peculiar to Martynov alone. As a matter of fact, it is possible to "raise the activity of the masses of the workers" *only* provided this activity *is not restricted entirely* to "political agitation on an economic basis." And one of the fundamental conditions for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organization of *all-sided* political exposure. In *no other way* can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity except by means of such exposures. Hence, to conduct such activity is one of the most important functions of international Social-Democracy as

olutionary activity.

Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display so little revolutionary activity in connection with the brutal way in which the police maltreat the people, in connection with the persecution of the religious sects, with the flogging of the peasantry, with the outrageous censorship, with the torture of soldiers, with the persecution of the most innocent cultural enterprises,

etc.? Is it because the "economic struggle" does not "stimulate" them to this, because such political activity does not "promise palpable results," because it produces little that is "positive"? No. To advance this argument, we repeat, is merely to shift the blame to the shoulders of others, to blame the masses of the workers for our own philistinism (also Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our remoteness from the mass movement; we must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organize a sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposure of these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel* that the students and religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life, and, feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to respond to these things and then he will organize cat-calls against the censors one day, another day he will demonstrate outside the house of the provincial governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising, another day he will teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc. As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, to *hurl* universal and fresh exposures among the masses of the workers. Many of us as yet do not appreciate the *bounden duty* that rests upon us, but spontaneously follow in the wake of the "drab every-day struggle," in the narrow confines of factory life. Under such circumstances to say that "*Iskra* displays a tendency to belittle the significance of the forward march of the drab every-day struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas" (Martynov, p. 61)—means dragging the Party backward, defending and glorifying our unpreparedness and backwardness.

As for calling the masses to action, that will come of itself immediately energetic political agitation, live and striking exposures are set going. To catch some criminal red-handed and immediately to brand him publicly will have far more effect than any number of "appeals"; the effect very often will be such as will make it impossible to tell exactly who it was that "appealed" to the crowd, and exactly who suggested this or that plan of demonstration, etc. Calls for action, not in the general, but in the concrete sense of the term, can be made only at the place of action; only those who themselves go into action immediately can make appeals for action. And our business as Social-Democratic publicists is to deepen, to expand and intensify political exposures and political agitation.

A word in passing about "calls to action." *The only paper* that *prior to* the spring events *called upon* the workers actively to intervene in a matter that certainly did *not promise* any *palpable results* for the workers, *i.e.*, the drafting of the students into the army, *was Iskra*. Immediately after the publication of the order of January 11, on "drafting the 183 students into the army," *Iskra* published an article about it (in its February issue, No. 2),*

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* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV, Book I, p. 70.—*Ed.*

* The demand "to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" most *strikingly expresses subservience to spontaneity in the sphere of political activity.* Very often the economic struggle *spontaneously* assumes a political character, that is to say, without the injection of the "revolutionary bacilli of the intelligentsia," without the intervention of the class-conscious Social Democrats. For example, the economic struggle of the British workers assumed a political character without the intervention of the Socialists. The tasks of the Social Democrats, however, are not exhausted by political agitation in the economic field; their task is to *convert* trade union politics into the Social Democratic political struggle, to *utilize* the flashes of political consciousness which gleam in the minds of the workers during their economic struggle *for the purpose of raising* them to the level of *Social Democratic* political consciousness. The Martynovs, however, instead of raising and stimulating the spontaneously awakening political consciousness of the workers, *bow down before spontaneity* and repeat over and over again, until one is sick and tired of hearing it, that the economic struggle "stimulates" in the workers' minds thoughts about their own lack of political rights. It is unfortunate, gentlemen, that the spontaneously awakening trade union political consciousness does not "*stimulate*" in your minds thoughts about your Social Democratic tasks!

"economic" politics alone; we want to know everything that everybody else knows, we want to learn the details of *all* aspects of political life and to take part *actively* in every political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less of what we already know,* and tell us more about what we do not know and what we can never learn from our factory and "economic" experience, that is, you must give us political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your *duty* to bring us this knowledge in a hundred and a thousand times greater measure than you have done up to now; and you must bring us this knowledge, not only in the form of arguments, pamphlets and articles which sometimes—excuse our frankness!—are very dull, but in the form of live *exposures* of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Fulfil this duty with greater zeal, and *talk less about "increasing the activity of the masses of the workers"!* We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to support, by open street fighting, demands that do not promise any "palpable results" whatever! You cannot "increase" our activity, because *you yourselves are not sufficiently active.* Bow in worship to spontaneity less, and think more about increasing *your own* activity, gentlemen!

D. What Is There in Common Between Economism and Terrorism?

In the last footnote we quoted the opinion of an Economist and of a non-Social-Democratic terrorist who, by chance, proved to be in agreement with him. Speaking generally, however, between the two there is not an

* To prove that this imaginary speech of a worker to an Economist is based on fact, we shall call two witnesses who undoubtedly have direct knowledge of the labour movement, and who can be least suspected of being partial towards us "doctrinaires," for one witness is an Economist (who regards even *Rabocheye Dyelo* as a political organ!), and the other is a terrorist. The first witness is the author of a remarkably truthful and lively article entitled "The St. Petersburg Labour Movement and the Practical Tasks of Social-Democracy," published in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6. He divided the workers into the following categories: 1. class-conscious revolutionaries; 2. intermediate stratum; 3. the masses. Now the intermediate stratum he says "is often more interested in questions of political life than in its own immediate economic interests, the connection between which and the general social conditions it has long understood. . . ." *Rabochaya Mysl* "is sharply criticized": "it keeps on repeating the same thing over and over again, things we have long known, read long ago." "Nothing in the political review again!" (Pp. 30-31.) But even the third stratum, ". . . the younger and more sensitive section of the workers, less corrupted by the tavern and the church, who have hardly ever had the opportunity of reading political literature, discuss political events in a rambling way and ponder deeply over the fragmentary news they get about the student riots, etc." The second witness, the terrorist, writes as follows: ". . .They read over once or twice the petty details of factory life in other towns, not their own, and then they read no more. . . . 'Awfully dull,' they say. . . . To say nothing in a workers' paper about the government . . . signifies that the workers are regarded as being little children. . . . The workers are not babies." (*Svoboda* [*Freedom*], published by the Revolutionary Socialist group, pp. 69-70.)

accidental, but a necessary, inherent connection, about which we shall have to speak further on, but which must be dealt with here in connection with the question of training the masses in revolutionary activity. The Economists and the modern terrorists spring from a common root, namely, the *worship of spontaneity,* of which we dealt with in the preceding chapter as a general phenomenon, and which we shall now examine in relation to its effect upon political activity and the political struggle. At first sight, our assertion may appear paradoxical, for the difference between these two appears to be so enormous: one stresses the "drab every-day struggle" and the other calls for the most self-sacrificing struggle of individuals. But this is not a paradox. The Economists and terrorists merely bow to different poles of spontaneity: the Economists bow to the spontaneity of the "pure and simple" labour movement, while the terrorists bow to the spontaneity of the passionate indignation of the intellectuals, who are either incapable of linking up the revolutionary struggle with the labour movement, or lack the opportunity to do so. It is very difficult indeed for those who have lost their belief, or who have never believed that this is possible, to find some other outlet for their indignation and revolutionary energy than terror. Thus, both the forms of worship of spontaneity we have mentioned are nothing more nor less than *a beginning in the carrying out* of the notorious *Credo* program. Let the workers carry on their "economic struggle against the employers and the government" (we apologize to the author of the *Credo* for expressing his views in Martynov's words! But we think we have the right to do so because even the *Credo* says that in the economic struggle the workers "come up against the political regime"), and let the intellectuals conduct the political struggle by their own efforts—with the aid of terror, of course! This is an absolutely logical and inevitable *conclusion* which must be insisted upon—*even though those* who were beginning to carry out this program *did not themselves realize* that it was inevitable. Political activity has its logic quite apart from the consciousness of those who, with the best intentions, call either for terror or for lending the economic struggle itself a political character. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and, in this case, good intentions cannot save one from being spontaneously drawn "along the line of least resistance," along the line of the *purely bourgeois Credo* program. Surely it is not an accident that many Russian liberals—avowed liberals and liberals who wear the mask of Marxism—wholeheartedly sympathize with terror and strive to foster the spirit of terrorism that is running so high at the present time.

The formation of the *Svoboda* Revolutionary Socialist group—which was formed with the object of giving all possible assistance to the labour movement, but which included in its *program* terror, and emancipation, so to speak, from Social-Democracy—this fact once again confirmed the remarkable penetration of P. B. Axelrod who *literally foretold* these results of Social-Democratic wavering *as far back as the end of 1897* (*Modern Tasks and Modern Tactics*), when he outlined his remarkable "two pros-

pects." All the subsequent disputes and disagreements among Russian Social-Democrats are contained, like a plant in the seed, in these two prospects.*

From this point of view it will be clear that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, being unable to withstand the spontaneity of Economism, has been unable also to withstand the spontaneity of terrorism. It would be interesting to note here the specific arguments that *Svoboda* advanced in defence of terrorism. It "completely denies" the deterrent role of terrorism (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism*, p. 64), but instead stresses its "excitative significance." This is characteristic, first, as representing one of the stages of the break-up and decay of the traditional (pre-Social-Democratic) cycle of ideas which insisted upon terrorism. To admit that the government cannot now be "terrified," and therefore disrupted, by terror, is tantamount to condemning terror as a system of struggle, as a sphere of activity sanctioned by the program. Secondly, it is still more characteristic as an example of the failure to understand our immediate task of "training the masses in revolutionary activity." *Svoboda* advocates terror as a means of "exciting" the labour movement, and of giving it a "strong impetus." It is difficult to imagine an argument that disproves itself more than this one does! Are there not enough outrages committed in Russian life that a special "stimulant" has to be invented? On the other hand, is it not obvious that those who are not, and cannot be, roused to excitement even by Russian tyranny will stand by "twiddling their thumbs" even while a handful of terrorists are engaged in single combat with the government? The fact is, however, that the masses of the workers are roused to a high pitch of excitement by the outrages committed in Russian life, but we are unable to collect, if one may put it that way, and concentrate all these drops and streamlets of popular excitement, which are called forth by the conditions of Russian life to a far larger extent than we imagine, but which it is precisely necessary to combine into a *single* gigantic flood. That this can be accomplished is irrefutably proved by the enormous growth of the labour movement and the greed with which the workers devour political literature, to which we have already referred above. Calls for terror and calls to give the economic

* Martynov "conceives of another, more realistic [?] dilemma" (*Social-Democracy and the Working Class*, p. 19): "Either Social-Democracy undertakes the direct leadership of the economic struggle of the proletariat and by that [!] transforms it into a revolutionary class struggle. . ." "by that," *i. e.*, apparently the direct leadership of the economic struggle. Can Martynov quote an example where the leadership of the industrial struggle *alone* has succeeded in transforming the trade union movement into a revolutionary class movement? Cannot he understand that in order to bring about this "transformation" we must actively undertake the "direct leadership" *of all-sided* political agitation? ". . . Or the other prospect: Social-Democracy refrains from taking the leadership of the economic struggle of the workers and so . . . clips its own wings. . . ." In *Rabocheye Dyelo's* opinion, which we quoted above, *Iskra* "refrains." We have seen, however, that the latter *does far more* to lead the economic struggle than *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but it does not confine itself to this, and does not *curtail* its political tasks for the sake of it.

struggle itself a political character are merely two different forms of *evading* the most pressing duty that now rests upon Russian revolutionaries, namely, to organize all-sided political agitation. *Svoboda* desires to *substitute* terror for agitation, openly admitting that "as soon as intensified and strenuous agitation is commenced among the masses its excitative function will be finished." (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism,* p. 68.) This proves precisely that both the terrorists and the Economists *underestimate* the revolutionary activity of the masses, in spite of the striking evidence of the events that took place in the spring,* and whereas one goes out in search of artificial "stimulants," the other talks about "concrete demands." But both fail to devote sufficient attention to the development of *their own activity* in political agitation and organization of political exposures. And no other work can serve as a *substitute* for this work either at the present time or at any other time.

E. The Working Class as Champion of Democracy

We have seen that the carrying on of wide political agitation, and consequently the organization of all-sided political exposures, is an absolutely necessary and *paramount* task of activity, that is, if that activity is to be truly Social-Democratic. We arrived at this conclusion *solely* on the grounds of the pressing needs of the working class for political knowledge and political training. But this presentation of the question is too narrow, for it ignores the general democratic tasks of Social-Democracy in general, and of modern Russian Social-Democracy in particular. In order to explain the situation more concretely we shall approach the subject from an aspect that is "nearer" to the Economist, namely, from the practical aspect. "Everyone agrees" that it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the working class. But the question arises, *how* is that to be done? What must be done to bring this about? The economic struggle merely brings the workers "up against" questions concerning the attitude of the government towards the working class. Consequently, *however much we may try* to lend the "economic struggle itself a political character" *we shall never be able* to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the degree of Social-Democratic consciousness) by confining ourselves to the economic struggle, for *the limits of this task are too narrow.* The Martynov formula has some value for us, not because it illustrates Martynov's ability to confuse things, but because it strikingly expresses the fundamental error that all the Economists commit, namely, their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers *from within* the economic struggle, so to speak, *i.e.,* making the economic struggle the exclusive, or, at least, the main starting point, making the economic struggle the exclusive,

* This refers to the big street demonstrations which commenced in the spring of *1901.* [Author's note to the 1908 edition —*Ed.*]

or, at least, the main basis. Such a view is radically wrong. Piqued by our opposition to them, the Economists refuse to ponder deeply over the origins of these disagreements, with the result that we absolutely fail to understand each other. It is as if we spoke in different tongues.

Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only outside of the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The only sphere from which it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between *all* the various classes and strata and the state and the government—the sphere of the interrelations between *all* the various classes. For that reason, the reply to the question: what must be done in order to bring political knowledge to the workers? cannot be merely the one which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those who are inclined towards Economism, usually content themselves with, *i.e.*, "go among the workers." To bring political knowledge to the *workers* the Social-Democrats must *go among all classes of the population*, must dispatch units of their army *in all directions*.

We deliberately select this awkward formula, we deliberately express ourselves in a simple, forcible way, not because we desire to indulge in paradoxes, but in order to "stimulate" the Economists to take up those tasks which they unpardonably ignore, to make them understand the difference between trade union and Social-Democratic politics, which they refuse to understand. Therefore, we beg the reader not to get excited, but to listen patiently to the end.

Take the type of Social-Democratic circle that has been most widespread during the past few years, and examine its work. It has "contacts with the workers," it issues leaflets—in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists and the tyranny of the police are strongly condemned—and it rests content with this. At meetings of workers the discussions never, or rarely, go beyond the limits of these subjects. Lectures and discussions on the history of the revolutionary movement, on questions of the home and foreign policy of our government, on questions of the economic evolution of Russia and of Europe, and the position of the various classes in modern society, etc., are extremely rare. Of systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society, no one even dreams. The ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is something more in the nature of a trade union secretary than a Socialist political leader. Any trade union secretary, an English one for instance, helps the workers to conduct the economic struggle, helps to expose factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and of measures which hamper the freedom to strike and the freedom to picket (*i.e.*, to warn all and sundry that a strike is proceeding at a certain factory), explains the partiality of arbitration court judges who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." It cannot

be too strongly insisted that *this is not* enough to constitute Social-Democracy. The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be a trade union secretary, but *a tribune of the people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; he must be able to group all these manifestations into a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; he must be able to take advantage of every petty event in order to explain his Socialistic convictions and his democratic demands *to all*, in order to explain *to all* and everyone *the world-historic significance of the struggle for the* emancipation of the proletariat. Compare, for example, a leader like Robert Knight (the celebrated secretary and leader of the Boiler-Makers' Society, one of the most powerful trade unions in England) with Wilhelm Liebknecht, and then take the contrasts that Martynov draws in his controversy with *Iskra*. You will see—I am running through Martynov's article—that Robert Knight engaged more in "calling the masses to certain concrete actions" (p. 39) while Liebknecht engaged more in "the revolutionary explanation of the whole of modern society, or various manifestations of it" (pp. 38-39); that Robert Knight "formulated the immediate demands of the proletariat and pointed to the manner in which they can be achieved" (p. 41), whereas Wilhelm Liebknecht, while doing this, "simultaneously guided the activities of various opposition strata," "dictated to them a positive program of action"* (p. 41); that it was precisely Robert Knight who strove "as far as possible to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" (p. 42) and was excellently able "to submit to the government concrete demands promising certain palpable results" (p. 43), while Liebknecht engaged more in "one-sided" "exposures" (p. 40); that Robert Knight attached more significance to the "forward march of the drab, every-day struggle" (p. 61), while Liebknecht *attached more significance to the "propaganda of brilliant* and finished ideas" (p. 61); that Liebknecht converted the paper he was directing into "an organ of revolutionary opposition exposing the present system and particularly the political conditions which came into conflict with the interests of the most varied strata of the population" (p. 63), whereas Robert Knight "worked for the cause of labour in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" (p. 63)—if by "close and organic contact" is meant the worship of spontaneity which we studied above from the example of Krichevsky and Martynov—and "restricted the sphere of his influence," convinced, of course, as is Martynov, that "by that he intensified that influence" (p. 63). In a word, you will see that *de facto* Martynov reduces Social-Democracy to the level of trade unionism, and he does this, of course, not because he does not desire the good of Social-Democracy, but simply because he is a little too much in a hurry to make Plekhanov more profound, instead of taking the trouble to understand him.

* *For example, during the Franco-Prussian War, Liebknecht dictated a program of action for the whole of democracy*—and this was done to an even greater extent by Marx and Engels in 1848.

Let us return, however, to the elucidation of our thesis. We said that a Social-Democrat, if he really believes it is necessary to develop the all-sided political consciousness of the proletariat, must "go among all classes of the people." This gives rise to the questions: How is this to be done? Have we enough forces to do this? Is there a base for such work among all the other classes? Will this not mean a retreat, or lead to a retreat, from the class point of view? We shall deal with these questions.

We must "go among all classes of the people" as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators and as organizers. No one doubts that the theoretical work of Social-Democrats should be directed towards studying all the features of the social and political position of the various classes. But extremely little is done in this direction as compared with the work that is done in studying the features of factory life. In the committees and circles, you will meet men who are immersed, say, in the study of some special branch of the metal industry, but you will hardly ever find members of organizations (obliged, as often happens, for some reason or other to give up practical work) especially engaged in the collection of material concerning some pressing question of social and political life in our country which could serve as a means for conducting Social-Democratic work among other strata of the population. In speaking of the lack of training of the majority of present-day leaders of the labour movement, we cannot refrain from mentioning the point about training in this connection also, for it too is bound up with the "economic" conception of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." The principal thing, of course, is *propaganda* and *agitation* among all strata of the people. The West European Social-Democrats find their work in this field facilitated by the calling of public meetings, to which *all* are free to go, and by the parliament, in which they speak to the representatives of *all* classes. We have neither a parliament nor the freedom to call meetings, nevertheless we are able to arrange meetings of workers who desire to listen to *a Social-Democrat.* We must also find ways and means of calling meetings of representatives of all classes of the population that desire to listen to a *democrat*; for he who forgets that "the Communists support every revolutionary movement," that we are obliged for that reason to expound and emphasize *general democratic tasks before the whole people,* without for a moment concealing our Socialist convictions, is not a Social-Democrat. He who forgets his obligation to *be in advance of everybody* in bringing up, sharpening and solving *every* general democratic problem is not a Social-Democrat.

"But everybody agrees with this!"—the impatient reader will exclaim—and the new instructions given by the last Congress of the Union to the editorial board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* say: "All events of social and political life that affect the proletariat either directly as a special class or *as the vanguard of all the revolutionary forces in the struggle for freedom* should serve as subjects for political propaganda and agitation." (*Two Congresses,* p. 17, our italics.) Yes, these are very true and very good words and we

would be satisfied if *Rabocheye Dyelo understood* them *and if it refrained from saying in the next breath things that are the very opposite of them.*

Ponder over the following piece of Martynov reasoning. On page 40 he says that *Iskra's* tactics of exposing abuses are one-sided, that "however much we may spread distrust and hatred towards the government, we shall not achieve our aim until we have succeeded in developing sufficiently active social energy for its overthrow." This, it may be said in parenthesis, is the concern, with which we are already familiar, for increasing the activity of the masses, while at the same time striving to restrict one's own activity. This is not the point we are now discussing, however. Martynov, therefore, speaks of *revolutionary* energy ("for overthrowing"). But what conclusion does he arrive at? As in ordinary times various social strata inevitably march separately,

> "it is, therefore, clear that we Social-Democrats cannot simultaneously guide the activities of various opposition strata, we cannot dictate to them a positive program of action, we cannot point out to them in what manner they can fight for their daily interests.... The liberal strata will themselves take care of the active struggle for their immediate interests and this struggle will bring them up against our political regime." (P. 41.)

Thus, having commenced by speaking of revolutionary energy, of the active struggle for the overthrow of the autocracy, Martynov immediately turned towards trade union energy and active struggle for immediate interests! It goes without saying that we cannot guide the struggle of the students, liberals, etc., for their "immediate interests," but this is not the point we are arguing about, most worthy Economist! The point we are discussing is the possible and necessary participation of various social strata in the overthrow of the autocracy; not only are we *able*, but it is our duty, to guide *these* "activities of the various opposition strata" if we desire to be the "vanguard." Not only will the students and our liberals, etc., themselves take care of "the struggle that will bring them up against our political regime"; the police and the officials of the autocratic government will see to this more than anyone else. But if "we" desire to be advanced democrats, we must make it our business to *stimulate* in the minds of those who are dissatisfied only with university, or only with Zemstvo,* etc., conditions the idea that the whole political system is worthless. *We* must take upon ourselves the task of organizing a universal political struggle under the leadership of *our* Party in such a manner as to obtain all the support possible of all opposition strata for the struggle and for our Party. *We* must train our Social-Democratic practical workers to become political leaders, able

* *Zemstvos* were local self-government bodies in pre-revolutionary Russia whose scope of activity was limited to the local affairs of the village population (road-laying, building of hospitals, schools, etc.). Liberal-minded landowners played a prominent part in them.—*Ed.*

to guide all the manifestations of this universal struggle, able at the right time to "dictate a positive program of action" for the turbulent students, for the discontented Zemstvo Councillors, for the incensed religious sects, for the offended elementary school teachers, etc., etc. For that reason, Martynov's assertion—that "with regard to these, we can come forward merely in *the negative* role of exposers of abuses . . . we can *only* [our italics] dissipate the hopes they have in various government commissions"—*is absolutely wrong*. By saying this Martynov shows that *he absolutely fails to understand* the role the revolutionary "vanguard" must really play. If the reader bears this in mind, the *real sense* of the following concluding remarks by Martynov will be clear to him:

> "*Iskra* is in fact the organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs in so far as they affect the interests of the most diverse classes of the population. We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of labour in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle. By restricting the sphere of our influence, we intensify that influence." (P. 63.)

The true sense of this conclusion is as follows: *Iskra* desires to *elevate* working-class trade union politics (to which, owing to misunderstanding, lack of training, or by conviction, our practical workers frequently confine themselves) to Social-Democratic politics, whereas *Rabocheye Dyelo* desires to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to trade union politics. And while doing this, they assure the world that these two positions are "quite compatible in the common cause" (p. 63). *O! Sancta simplicitas!*

To proceed: Have we sufficient forces to be able to direct our propaganda and agitation among *all* classes of the population? Of course we have. Our Economists are frequently inclined to deny this. They lose sight of the gigantic progress our movement has made from (approximately) 1894 to 1901. Like real "*khvostists*," they frequently live in the distant past, in the period of the beginning of the movement. At that time, indeed, we had astonishingly few forces, and it was perfectly natural and legitimate then to resolve to go exclusively among the workers, and severely condemn any deviation from this. The whole task then was to consolidate our position in the working class. At the present time, however, gigantic forces have been attracted to the movement; the best representatives of the young generation of the educated classes are coming over to us; all over the country there are people compelled to live in the provinces, who have taken part in the movement in the past and desire to do so now, who are gravitating towards Social-Democracy (in 1894 you could count the Social-Democrats on your fingers). One of the principal political and organizational shortcomings of our movement is that we are *unable* to utilize all these forces and give them appropriate work (we shall deal with this in detail in the next chapter). The overwhelming majority of these forces entirely lack

the opportunity of "going among the workers," so there are no grounds for fearing that we shall deflect forces from our main cause. And in order to be able to provide the workers with real, universal and live political knowledge, we must have "our own men," Social-Democrats, everywhere, among all social strata, and in all positions from which we can learn the inner springs of our state mechanism. Such men are required for propaganda and agitation, but in a still larger measure for organization.

Is there scope for activity among all classes of the population? Those who fail to see this also lag behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses as far as class consciousness is concerned. The labour movement has aroused and is continuing to arouse discontent in some, hopes for support for the opposition in others, and the consciousness of the intolerableness and inevitable downfall of the autocracy in still others. We would be "politicians" and Social-Democrats only in name (as very often happens), if we failed to realize that our task is to utilize every manifestation of discontent, and to collect and utilize every grain of even rudimentary protest. This is quite apart from the fact that many millions of the peasantry, handicraftsmen, petty artisans, etc., always listen eagerly to the preachings of any Social-Democrat who is at all intelligent. Is there a single class of the population in which no individuals, groups or circles are to be found who are discontented with the lack of rights and tyranny and, therefore, accessible to the propaganda of Social-Democrats as the spokesmen of the most pressing general democratic needs? To those who desire to have a clear idea of what the political agitation of a Social-Democrat *among all* classes and strata of the population should be like, we would point to *political exposures* in the broad sense of the word as the principal (but of course not the sole) form of this agitation.

> "We must arouse in every section of the population that is at all enlightened a passion for *political* exposure," I wrote in my article "Where To Begin?" (*Iskra*, No. 4, May 1901), with which I shall deal in greater detail later. "We must not allow ourselves to be discouraged by the fact that the voice of political exposure is still feeble, rare and timid. This is not because of a general submission to police tyranny, but because those who are able and ready to make exposures *have no tribune from which to speak, because there is no* audience to listen eagerly to and approve of what the orators say, and because the latter do not see anywhere among the people forces to whom it would be worth while directing their complaint against the 'omnipotent' Russian government.... We are now in a position, and it is our duty, to set up a tribune for the national exposure of the tsarist government. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic paper."*

* See Lenin. *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II, p. 20—*Ed.*

The ideal audience for these political exposures is the working class, which is first and foremost in need of universal and live political knowledge, which is most capable of converting this knowledge into active struggle, even if it does not promise "palpable results." The only platform from which *public* exposures can be made is an all-Russian newspaper. "Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable in modern Europe." In this connection Russia must undoubtedly be included in modern Europe. The press has long ago become a power in our country, otherwise the government would not spend tens of thousands of rubles to bribe it, and to subsidize the Katkovs and Meshcherskys. And it is no novelty in autocratic Russia for the underground press to break through the wall of censorship and *compel* the legal and conservative press to speak openly of it. This was the case in the 'seventies and even in the 'fifties. How much broader and deeper are now the strata of the people willing to read the illegal underground press, and to learn from it "how to live and how to die," to use the expression of the worker who sent a letter to *Iskra*. (No. 7.) Political exposures are as much a declaration of war against the *government* as economic exposures are a declaration of war against the factory owners. And the wider and more powerful this campaign of exposure is, the more numerous and determined the social *class*, which has *declared war in order to commence the war*, will be, the greater will be the moral significance of this declaration of war. Hence, political exposures in themselves serve as a powerful instrument for *disintegrating* the system we oppose, the means for diverting from the enemy his casual or temporary allies, the means for spreading enmity and distrust among those who permanently share power with the autocracy.

Only a party that will *organize* real, *public* exposures can become the vanguard of the revolutionary forces in our time. The word "public" has a very profound meaning. The overwhelming majority of the non-working-class exposers (and in order to become the vanguard, we must attract other classes) are sober politicians and cool businessmen. They know perfectly well how dangerous it is to "complain" even against a minor official, let alone against the "omnipotent" Russian government. And they will come *to us* with their complaints only when they see that these complaints really have effect, and when they see that we represent a *political* force. In order to become this political force in the eyes of outsiders, much persistent and stubborn work is required to *raise* our own consciousness, initiative and energy. For this, it is not sufficient to stick the label "vanguard" on rear-guard theory and practice.

But if we have to undertake the organization of the real, public exposure of the government, in what way will the class character of our movement be expressed?—the over-zealous advocates of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" will ask us. The reply is: in that we Social-Democrats will organize these public exposures; in that all the questions that are brought up by the agitation will be explained consistently in the

spirit of Social-Democracy, without any concessions to deliberate or unconscious distortions of Marxism; in the fact that the Party will carry on this universal political agitation, uniting into one inseparable whole the pressure upon the government in the name of the whole people, the revolutionary training of the proletariat—while preserving its political independence—the guidance of the economic struggle of the working class; the utilization of all its spontaneous conflicts with its exploiters, which rouse and bring into our camp increasing numbers of the proletariat.

But one of *the most characteristic features of Economism is its failure* to understand this connection. More than that—it fails to understand the identity of the most pressing needs of the proletariat (an all-sided political education through the medium of political agitation and political exposures) with the needs of the general democratic movement. This lack of understanding is not only expressed in "Martynovite" phrases, but also in the reference to the class point of view which is identical in meaning with these phrases. The following, for example, is how the authors of the "Economist" letter in No. 12 of *Iskra* expressed themselves.*

> "This fundamental drawback [overestimating ideology] is the cause of *Iskra's* inconsistency in regard to the question of the relations between Social-Democrats and various social classes and tendencies. By a process of theoretical reasoning [and not by "the growth of Party tasks which grow with the Party"], *Iskra* arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary immediately to take up the struggle against absolutism, but in all probability sensing the difficulty of this task for the workers in the present state of affairs [not only sensing, but knowing perfectly well that this problem would seem less difficult to the workers than to those "Economist" intellectuals who are concerned about little children, for the workers are prepared to fight even for demands which, to use the language of the never-to-be-forgotten Martynov, do not "promise palpable results"] and lacking the patience to wait until the working class has accumulated forces for this struggle, *Iskra* begins to seek for allies in the ranks of the liberals and intelligentsia."

Yes, yes, we have indeed lost all "patience" to "wait" for the blessed time that has long been promised us by the "conciliators," when the Economists will stop throwing the blame for their *own* backwardness upon the workers, and stop justifying their own lack of energy by the alleged lack of forces

* Lack of space has prevented us from replying in full, in *Iskra*, to this letter, which is extremely characteristic of the Economists. We were very glad this letter appeared, for the charges brought against *Iskra*, that it did not maintain a consistent, class point of view, have reached us long ago from various sources, and we have been waiting for an appropriate opportunity, or for a formulated expression of this fashionable charge, to reply to it. And it is our habit to reply to attacks not by defence, but by counter-attacks.

among the workers. We ask our Economists: what does "the working class accumulating forces for this struggle" mean? Is it not evident that it means the political training of the workers, revealing to them *all* the aspects of our despicable autocracy? And is it not clear that *precisely for this work* we need "allies in the ranks of the liberals and intelligentsia," who are prepared to join us in the exposure of the political attack on the Zemstvo, on the teachers, on the statisticians, on the students, etc.? Is this "cunning mechanism" so difficult to understand after all? Has not P. B. Axelrod repeated to you over and over again since 1897: "The problem of the Russian Social-Democrats acquiring direct and indirect allies among the non-proletarian classes will be solved principally by the character of the propagandist activities conducted among the proletariat itself?" And Martynov and the other Economists continue to imagine that the workers must *first* accumulate forces (for trade union politics) "in the economic struggle against the employers and the government," and *then* "go over" (we suppose from trade union "training for activity") to Social-Democratic activity.

> "... In its quest," continue the Economists, "*Iskra* not infrequently departs from the class point of view, obscures class antagonisms and puts into the forefront the general character of the prevailing discontent with the government, notwithstanding the fact that the causes and the degree of this discontent vary very considerably among the 'allies.' Such, for example, is *Iskra's* attitude towards the Zemstvo...."

Iskra, it is alleged, "promises the nobility, who are discontented with the government's doles, the aid of the working class, but does not say a word about the class differences among these strata of the people." If the reader will turn to the series of articles "The Autocracy and the Zemstvo" (Nos. 2 and 4 of *Iskra*), to which, in all *probability*, the authors of the letter refer, he will find that these articles* deal with the attitude of the *government* towards the "mild agitation of the feudal-bureaucratic Zemstvo," and towards the "independent activity of even the propertied classes." In these articles it is stated that the workers cannot look on indifferently while the government is carrying on a fight against the Zemstvo, and the supporters of the Zemstvo are called upon to give up making pretty speeches, and to speak firmly and resolutely when revolutionary Social-Democracy confronts the government in all its strength. What there is in this that the authors of the letter do not agree with is not clear. Do they think that the workers will "not understand" the phrases "propertied classes" and "feudal-bureaucratic Zemstvo"? Do they think that *stimulating* the Zemstvo to abandon pretty speeches and to speak firmly and resolutely is "overestimating ideology"? Do they imagine that the workers can "accumulate forces" for

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* And *among* these articles there was one (*Iskra*, No. 3) especially dealing with the class antagonisms in the countryside. [See "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II, p. 234.—*Ed.*]

the fight against absolutism if they know nothing about the attitude of absolutism *towards* the Zemstvo? All this remains unknown. One thing alone is clear and that is that the authors of the letter have a very vague idea of what the political tasks of Social-Democracy are. This is revealed still more clearly by their remark: "Such also [*i.e.*, also "obscures class antagonisms"] is *Iskra's* attitude towards the student movement." Instead of calling upon the workers to declare by means of public demonstrations that the real centre of unbridled violence and outrage is not the students but the Russian government (*Iskra*, No. 2),* we should, no doubt, have inserted arguments in the spirit of *Rabochaya Mysl*! And such ideas were expressed by Social-Democrats in the autumn of 1901, after the events of February and March, on the eve of a fresh revival of the student movement, which revealed that even in this sphere the "spontaneous" protest against the autocracy is *outstripping* the conscious Social-Democratic leadership of the movement. The spontaneous striving of the workers to defend the students who were beaten up by the police and the Cossacks is outstripping the conscious activity of the Social-Democratic organizations.

"And yet in other articles," continue the authors of the letter, "*Iskra* condemns all compromises, and defends, for example, the intolerant conduct of the Guesdites." We would advise those who usually so conceitedly and frivolously declare in connection with the disagreements existing among the contemporary Social-Democrats that the disagreements are unimportant and would not justify a split, to ponder very deeply over these words. Is it possible for those who say that we have done astonishingly little to explain the hostility of the autocracy towards the various classes, and to inform the workers of the opposition of the various strata of the population towards the autocracy, to work successfully in the same organization with those who say that such work is a "compromise"—evidently a compromise with the theory of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government?"

We urged the necessity of introducing the class struggle in the rural districts on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the emancipation of the peasantry (No. 3)** and spoke of the irreconcilability between the local government bodies and the autocracy in connection with Witte's secret memorandum. (No. 4.) We attacked the feudal landlords and the government which served the latter on the occasion of the passing of the new law (No. 8),*** and welcomed the illegal Zemstvo congress that was held. We urged the Zemstvo to stop making degrading petitions (No. 8), and to come out and fight. We encouraged the students, who had begun to understand the need for the political struggle and to take up that struggle (No. 3) and, at the same time, we lashed out at the "barbarous lack of

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* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng ed., Vol IV, Book I, p. 70.—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, p. 101.—*Ed.*

*** *Ibid.*, p. 176.—*Ed.*

understanding" revealed by the adherents of the "purely student" movement, who called upon the students to abstain from taking part in the street demonstrations (No. 3, in connection with the manifesto issued by the Executive Committee of the Moscow students on February 25). We exposed the "senseless dreams" and the "lying hypocrisy" of the cunning liberals of *Rossiya* (*Russia,* No. 5) and at the same time we commented on the fury with which "peaceful writers, aged professors, scientists and well-known liberal Zemstvo-ites were handled in the government's mental dungeons." (No. 5, "A Police Raid on Literature.") We exposed the real significance of the program of "state concern for the welfare of the workers," and welcomed the "valuable admission" that "it is better by granting reforms from above to forestall the demand for such reforms from below, than to wait for those demands to be put forward." (No. 6.)* We encouraged the protests of the statisticians (No. 7), and censured the strike-breaking statisticians. (No. 9.) He who sees in these tactics the obscuring of the class consciousness of the proletariat and *compromise with liberalism* shows that he absolutely fails to understand the true significance of the program of the *Credo* and *is carrying out that program de facto,* however much he may deny this! Because *by that* he drags Social-Democracy towards the "economic struggle against the employers and the government" but *yields to liberalism,* abandons the task of actively intervening *in every* "liberal" question and of defining *his own* Social-Democratic attitude towards such questions.

F. Again "Slanderers," Again "Mystifiers"

These polite expressions were uttered by *Rabocheye Dyelo* which in this way answers our charge that it "indirectly prepared the ground for converting the labour movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy." In its simplicity of heart *Rabocheye Dyelo* decided that this accusation was nothing more than a polemical sally, as if to say, these malicious doctrinaires can only think of saying unpleasant things about us; now what can be more unpleasant than being an instrument of bourgeois democracy? And so they print in heavy type a "refutation": "nothing but downright slander" (*Two Congresses,* p. 30), "mystification" (p. 31), "masquerade" (p. 33). Like Jupiter, *Rabocheye Dyelo* (although it has little resemblance to Jupiter) is angry because it is wrong, and proves by its hasty abuse that it is incapable of understanding its opponents' mode of reasoning. And yet, with only a little reflection it would have understood why *all* worship of the spontaneity of the mass movement and *any* degrading of Social-Democratic politics to trade union politics mean precisely preparing the ground for converting the labour movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy. The spontaneous labour movement by itself is able to create (and inevitably will create)

* *Ibid.*, p. 164.—*Ed.*

only trade unionism, and working-class trade union politics are precisely working-class bourgeois politics. The fact that the working class participates in the political struggle and even in political revolution does not in itself make its politics Social-Democratic politics.

Rabocheye Dyelo imagines that bourgeois democracy in Russia is merely a "phantom"* (*Two Congresses*, p. 32). Happy people! Like the ostrich, they bury their heads in the sand, and imagine that everything around has disappeared. A number of liberal publicists who month after month proclaimed to the world their triumph over the collapse and even disappearance of Marxism; a number of liberal newspapers (*S. Peterburgskiye Vyedomosti* [*St. Petersburg News*], *Russkiye Vyedomosti* and many others) which encouraged the liberals who bring to the workers the Brentano conception of the class struggle and the trade union conception of politics; the galaxy of critics of Marxism, whose real tendencies were so very well disclosed by the *Credo* and whose literary products alone circulate freely in Russia, the animation among revolutionary *non*-Social-Democratic tendencies, particularly after the February and March events—all these, of course, are mere phantoms! All these, of course, have nothing at all to do with bourgeois democracy!

Rabocheye Dyelo and the authors of the Economist letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, should "ponder over the reason why the events in the spring excited such animation among the revolutionary non-Social-Democratic tendencies instead of increasing the authority and the prestige of Social-Democracy." The reason was that we failed to cope with our tasks. The masses of the workers proved to be more active than we; we lacked adequately trained revolutionary leaders and organizers aware of the mood prevailing among all the opposition strata and able to march at the head of the movement, convert the spontaneous demonstrations into a political demonstration, broaden its political character, etc. Under such circumstances, our backwardness will inevitably be utilized by the more mobile and more *energetic non-Social-Democratic revolutionaries, and the workers,* no matter how strenuously and self-sacrificingly they may fight the police and the troops, no matter how revolutionary they may act, will prove to be merely a force supporting these revolutionaries, the rearguard of bourgeois democracy, and not the Social-Democratic vanguard. Take, for example, the German Social-Democrats, whose weak sides alone our Economists desire to emulate. Why is it that *not a single* political event takes place in Germany

* Then follows a reference to the "concrete Russian conditions which fatalistically impel the labour movement onto the revolutionary path." But these people refuse to understand that the revolutionary path of the labour movement might not be a Social-Democratic path! When absolutism reigned in Western Europe, the entire West European bourgeoisie "impelled," and deliberately impelled, the workers onto the path of revolution. We Social-Democrats, however, cannot be satisfied with that. And if we, by any means whatever, degrade Social-Democratic politics to the level of spontaneous trade union politics, we, by that, play into the hands of bourgeois democracy.

without adding to the authority and prestige of Social-Democracy? Because Social-Democracy is always found to be in advance of all others in its revolutionary estimation of every event and in its championship of every protest against tyranny. It does not soothe itself by arguments about the economic struggle bringing the workers up against their own lack of rights, and about concrete conditions fatalistically impelling the labour movement onto the path of revolution. It intervenes in every sphere and in every question of social and political life: in the matter of Wilhelm's refusal to endorse a bourgeois progressive as city mayor (our Economists have not yet managed to convince the Germans that this in fact is a compromise with liberalism!); in the question of the law against the publication of "immoral" writings and pictures; in the question of the government influencing the election of professors, etc., etc. Everywhere Social-Democracy is found to be ahead of all others, rousing political discontent among all classes, rousing the sluggards, pushing on the laggards and providing a wealth of material for the development of the political consciousness and political activity of the proletariat. The result of all this is that even the avowed enemies of Socialism are filled with respect for this advanced political fighter, and sometimes an important document from bourgeois and even from bureaucratic and Court circles makes its way by some miraculous means into the editorial office of *Vorwärts*.

IV

THE PRIMITIVENESS OF THE ECONOMISTS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARIES

Rabocheye Dyelo's assertions—which we have analysed—that the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of political agitation and that our task now is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character, etc., not only express a narrow view of our political tasks, but also of our *organizational* tasks. The "economic struggle against the employers and the government" does not in the least require—and therefore such a struggle can never give rise to—an all-Russian centralized organization that will combine, in a general attack, all the numerous manifestations of political opposition, protest and indignation, and organization that will consist of professional revolutionaries and be led by the real political leaders of the whole of the people. And this can be easily understood. The character of the organization of every institution is naturally and inevitably determined by the character of the activity that institution conducts. Consequently, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, by the above-analysed assertions, not only sanctifies and legitimatizes the narrowness of political activity, but also the narrowness of organizational work. And in this case also, as always, it is an organ whose consciousness yields to spontaneity. And yet the worship of sponta-

neously rising forms of organization, the lack of appreciation of the narrowness and primitiveness of our organizational work, of the degree to which we still work by "*kustar** methods" in this most important sphere, the lack of such appreciation, I say, is a very serious complaint from which our movement suffers. It is not a complaint that comes with decline, of course, it is a complaint that comes with growth. But it is precisely at the present time, when the wave of spontaneous indignation is, as it were, washing over us, leaders and organizers of the movement, that a most irreconcilable struggle must be waged against all defence of sluggishness, against any legitimization of restriction in this matter, and it is particularly necessary to rouse in all those participating in the practical work, in all who are just thinking of taking it up, discontent with the *primitive methods* that prevail among us and an unshakable determination to get rid of them.

A. What Are Primitive Methods?

We shall try to answer this question by giving a brief description of the activity of a typical Social-Democratic circle of the period of 1894-1901. We have already referred to the widespread interest in Marxism by the student youth in that period. Of course, these students were not only, or even not so much, absorbed in Marxism as a theory, but as an answer to the question: "what is to be done?", as a *call* to march against the enemy. And these new warriors marched to battle with astonishingly primitive equipment and training. In a vast number of cases, they had almost no equipment and absolutely no training. They marched to war like peasants from the plough, snatching up a club. A students' circle having no contacts with the old members of the movement, no contacts with circles in other districts, or even in other parts of the same city (or with other schools), without the various sections of the revolutionary work being in any way organized, having no systematic plan of activity covering any length of time, establishes contacts with the workers and sets to work. The circle gradually expands its propaganda and agitation; by its activities it wins the sympathies of a rather large circle of workers and of a certain section of the educated classes, which provides it with money and from which the "committee" recruits new groups of young people. The charm which the committee (or the League of Struggle) exercises on the youth increases, its sphere of activity becomes wider and its activities expand quite spontaneously: the very people who a year or a few months previously had spoken at the gatherings of the students' circle and discussed the question, "whither?" who established and maintained contacts with the workers, wrote and published leaflets, now establish contacts with other groups of revolutionaries, procure literature, set to work to establish a local newspaper, begin to talk

* *Kustars*—handicraftsmen employing primitive methods in their work.—*Ed.*

about organizing demonstrations, and finally, commence open hostilities (these open hostilities may, according to circumstances, take the form of the publication of the very first agitational leaflet, or the first newspaper, or of the organization of the first demonstration). And usually the first action ends in immediate and wholesale arrests. Immediate and wholesale, precisely because these open hostilities were not the result of a systematic and carefully thought out and gradually prepared plan for a prolonged and stubborn struggle, but simply the result of the spontaneous growth of traditional circle work; because, naturally, the police, in almost every case, knew the principal leaders of the local movement, for they had already "recommended" themselves to the police in their school-days, and the latter only waited for a convenient moment to make their raid. They gave the circle sufficient time to develop its work so that they might obtain a palpable *corpus delicti*,* and always allowed several of the persons known to them to remain at liberty in order to act as "decoys" (which, I believe, is the technical term used both by our people and by the gendarmes). One cannot help comparing this kind of warfare with that conducted by a mob of peasants armed with clubs against modern troops. One can only express astonishment at the virility displayed by the movement which expanded, grew and won victories in spite of the total lack of training among the fighters. It is true that from the historical point of view, the primitiveness of equipment was not only inevitable at first, but *even legitimate* as one of the conditions for the wide recruiting of fighters, but as soon as serious operations commenced (and they commenced in fact with the strikes in the summer of 1896), the defects in our fighting organizations made themselves felt to an increasing degree. Thrown into confusion at first and committing a number of mistakes (for example, its appeal to the public describing the misdeeds of the Socialists, or the deportation of the workers from the capital to the provincial industrial centres), the government very soon adapted itself to the new conditions of the struggle and managed to place its perfectly equipped detachments of *agents provocateurs*, spies and gendarmes in the required places. Raids became so frequent, affected such a vast number of people and cleared out the local circles so thoroughly that the masses of the workers literally lost all their leaders, the movement assumed an incredibly sporadic character, and it became utterly impossible to establish continuity and coherence in the work. The fact that the local active workers were hopelessly scattered, the casual manner in which the membership of the circles was recruited, the lack of training in and narrow outlook on theoretical, political and organizational questions were all the inevitable result of the conditions described above. Things reached such a pass that in several places the workers, because of our lack of stamina and ability to maintain secrecy, began to lose faith in the intelligentsia and to avoid them; the intellectuals, they said, are much too careless and lay themselves open to police raids!

* Offence within the meaning of the law.—*Ed.*

Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of the movement knows that these primitive methods at last began to be recognized as a disease by all thinking Social-Democrats. And in order that the reader who is not acquainted with the movement may have no grounds for thinking that we are "inventing" a special stage or special disease of the movement, we shall refer once again to the witness we have already quoted. No doubt we shall be excused for the length of the passage quoted:

> "While the gradual transition to wider practical activity," writes B—v in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, "a transition which is closely connected with the general transitional period through which the Russian labour movement is now passing, is a characteristic feature ... there is, however, another and not less interesting feature in the general mechanism of the Russian workers' revolution. We refer to the *general lack of revolutionary forces fit for action** which is felt not only in St. Petersburg, but throughout the whole of Russia. With the general revival of the labour movement, with the general development of the working masses, with the growing frequency of strikes, and with the mass labour struggle becoming more and more open, which intensifies government persecution, arrests, deportation and exile, this *lack of highly skilled revolutionary forces is becoming more and more marked* and, without a doubt, *must affect the depth and the general character of the movement*. Many strikes take place without the revolutionary organizations exercising any strong and direct influence upon them.... A shortage of agitational leaflets and illegal literature is felt.... The workers' circles are left without agitators.... Simultaneously, there is a constant shortage of funds. In a word, *the growth of the labour movement is outstripping the growth and development of the revolutionary organizations*. The numerical strength of the active revolutionaries is too small to enable them to concentrate in their own hands all the influence exercised upon the whole mass of labour now in a state of unrest, or to give this unrest even a shadow of symmetry and organization.... Separate circles, individual revolutionaries, scattered, uncombined, do not represent a united, strong and disciplined organization with the planned development of its parts...."

Admitting that the immediate organization of fresh circles to take the place of those that have been broken up "merely proves the virility of the movement ... but does not prove the existence of an adequate number of sufficiently fit revolutionary workers," the author concludes:

> "The lack of practical training among the St. Petersburg revolutionaries is seen in the results of their work. The recent trials, especially that of the "Self-Emancipation Group" and the "Labour versus Capital Group," clearly showed that the young agitator, unacquainted with

* All italics ours.

the details of the conditions of labour and, consequently, unacquainted with the conditions under which agitation must be carried on in a given factory, ignorant of the principles of conspiracy, and understanding only the general principles of Social-Democracy [and it is questionable whether he understands them] is able to carry on his work for perhaps four, five or six months. Then come arrests, which frequently lead to the break-up of the whole organization, or at all events, of part of it. The question arises, therefore, can the group conduct successful and fruitful activity if its existence is measured by months? Obviously, the defects of the existing organizations cannot be wholly ascribed to the transitional period.... Obviously, the numerical and above all the qualitative strength of the organizations operating is not of little importance, and the first task our Social-Democrats must undertake...is *effectively to combine the organizations and make a strict selection of their membership*."

B. Primitive Methods and Economism

We must now deal with the question that has undoubtedly arisen in the mind of every reader. Have these primitive methods, which are a complaint of growth affecting the *whole* of the movement, any connection with Economism, which is *only one* of the tendencies in Russian Social-Democracy? We think that they have. The lack of practical training, the lack of ability to carry on organizational work is certainly common *to us all*, including those who have stood unswervingly by the point of view of revolutionary Marxism from the very outset. And, of course, no one can blame the practical workers for their lack of practical training. But the term "primitive methods" embraces something more than mere lack of training: it means the restrictedness of revolutionary work generally, the failure to understand that a good organization of revolutionaries cannot be built up on the basis of such restricted work, and lastly—and most important—it means the attempts to justify this restrictedness and to elevate it to a special "theory" *i.e.*, bowing in worship to spontaneity in this matter also. As soon as such attempts were observed, it became certain that primitive methods are connected with Economism and that we shall never eliminate this restrictedness of our organizational activity until we eliminate Economism generally (*i.e.*, the narrow conception of Marxian theory, of the role of Social-Democracy and of its political tasks). And these attempts were revealed in a twofold direction. Some began to say: the labour masses themselves have not yet brought forward the broad and militant political tasks that the revolutionaries desire to "impose" upon them; they must continue for the time being to fight for *immediate* political demands, to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government"* (and, naturally,

* *Rabochaya Mysl and Rabocheye Dyelo*, especially the *Reply* to Plekhanov.

corresponding to this struggle which is "easily understood" by the mass movement there must be an organization that will be "easily understood" by the most untrained youth). Others, far removed from "gradualness," began to say: it is possible and necessary to "bring about a political revolution," but this is no reason whatever for building a strong organization of revolutionaries to train the proletariat in the steadfast and stubborn struggle. All we need do is to snatch up our old friend, the "handy" wooden club. Speaking without metaphor it means—we must organize a general strike,* or we must stimulate the "spiritless" progress of the labour movement by means of "excitative terror."** Both these tendencies, the opportunist and the "revolutionary," bow to the prevailing primitiveness; neither believes that it can be eliminated, neither understands our primary and most imperative practical task, namely, to establish *an organization of revolutionaries* capable of maintaining the energy, the stability and continuity of the political struggle.

We have just quoted the words of B—v: "The growth of the labour movement is outstripping the growth and development of the revolutionary organizations." This "valuable remark of a close observer" (*Rabocheye Dyelo's* comment on B—v's article) has a twofold value for us. It proves that we were right in our opinion that the principal cause of the present crisis in Russian Social-Democracy is that the *leaders* ("ideologists," revolutionaries, Social-Democrats) *lag behind the spontaneous upsurge of the masses.* It shows that all the arguments advanced by the authors of the Economist letter in *Iskra*, No. 12, by B. Krichevsky and by Martynov, about the dangers of belittling the significance of the spontaneous elements, about the drab every-day struggle, about the tactics-as-a-process, etc., are nothing more than a glorification and defence of primitive methods. These people who cannot pronounce the word "theoretician" without a contemptuous grimace, who describe their genuflections to common lack of training and ignorance as "sensitiveness to life," reveal in practice a failure to understand our most imperative *practical* task. To laggards they shout: Keep in step! Don't run ahead! To people suffering from a lack of energy and initiative in organizational work, from lack of "plans" for wide and bold organizational work, they shout about the "tactics-as-a-process"! The most serious sin we commit is that we *degrade* our political *and organizational* tasks to the level of the immediate, "palpable," "concrete" interests of the every-day economic struggle; and yet they keep singing to us the old song: lend the economic struggle itself a political character. We say again: this kind of thing displays as much "sensitiveness to life" as was displayed by the hero in the popular fable who shouted to a passing funeral procession: many happy returns of the day!

Recall the matchless, truly "Narcissus"-like superciliousness with which

* See "Who Will Bring About the Political Revolution" in the symposium published in Russia, entitled *The Proletarian Struggle.* Re-issued by the Kiev Committee.

** *Regeneration of Revolutionism* and *Svoboda.*

these wiseacres lectured Plekhanov about the "workers' *circles* generally" (*sic*!) being "incapable of fulfilling political tasks in the real and *practical* sense of the word, *i.e.*, in the sense of the expedient and successful *practical* struggle for political demands." (*Rabocheye Dyelo's Reply*, p. 24.) There are circles and circles, gentlemen! Circles of "*kustars*," of course, are not capable of fulfilling political tasks and never will be, until they realize the primitiveness of their methods and abandon it. If, besides this, these amateurs are enamoured of their primitive methods, and insist on writing the word "practical" in italics, and imagine that being practical demands that one's tasks be degraded to the level of understanding of the most backward strata of the masses, then they are hopeless, of course, and certainly cannot *fulfil any political tasks*. But a circle of heroes like Alexeyev and Myshkin, Khalturin and Zhelyabov is capable of performing political tasks in the genuine and most practical sense of the term, and it is capable of performing them because and to the extent that their passionate preaching meets with response among the spontaneously awakening masses, and their seething energy is answered and supported by the energy of the revolutionary class. Plekhanov was a thousand times right not only when he pointed to this revolutionary class, not only when he proved that its spontaneous awakening was inevitable, but also when he set the "workers' circles" a great and lofty political task. But you refer to the mass movement that has sprung up since that time in order to *degrade* this task, in order to *curtail* the energy and scope of activity of the "workers' circles." If you are not amateurs enamoured of your primitive methods, what are you then? You boast that you are practical, but you fail to see what every Russian practical worker knows, namely, the miracles that the energy, not only of circles, but even of individual persons is able to perform in the revolutionary cause. Or do you think that our movements cannot produce heroes like those that were produced by the movement in the 'seventies? If so, why do you think so? Because we lack training? But we are training ourselves, will go on training ourselves, and acquire the training! Unfortunately it is true that scum has formed on the surface of the stagnant waters of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government"; there are people among us who kneel in prayer to spontaneity, gazing with awe upon the "posteriors" of the Russian proletariat (as Plekhanov expresses it). But we will rid ourselves of this scum. The time has come when Russian revolutionaries, led by a genuinely revolutionary theory, relying upon the genuinely revolutionary and spontaneously awakening class, can at last—at last!—rise to their full height and exert their giant strength to the utmost. All that is required in order that this may be so is that the masses of our practical workers, and the still larger masses of those who dream of doing practical work even while still at school, shall meet with scorn and ridicule any suggestion that may be made to degrade our political tasks and to restrict the scope of our organizational work. And we shall achieve that, don't you worry, gentlemen!

But if the reader wishes to see the pearls of "Economist" passion for primitive methods, he must, of course, turn from the eclectic and vacillating *Rabocheye Dyelo* to the consistent and determined *Rabochaya Mysl.* In its Special Supplement, p. 13, R. M. wrote:

> "Now two words about the so-called revolutionary intelligentsia proper. It is true that on more than one occasion it proved that it was quite prepared to 'enter into determined battle with tsarism!' The unfortunate thing, however, is that, ruthlessly persecuted by the political police, our revolutionary intelligentsia imagined that the struggle with this political police was the political struggle with the autocracy. That is why, to this day, it cannot understand 'where the forces for the fight against the autocracy are to be obtained.' "

What matchless and magnificent contempt for the struggle with the police this worshipper (in the worst sense of the word) of the *spontaneous* movement displays, does he not? He is prepared to *justify* our inability to organize secretly by the argument that with the spontaneous growth of the mass movement, it is not at all important for us to fight against the political police!! Not many would agree to subscribe to this monstrous conclusion; our defects in revolutionary organization have become too urgent a matter to permit them to do that. And if Martynov, for example, would refuse to subscribe to it, it would only be because he is unable, or lacks the courage, to think out his ideas to their logical conclusion. Indeed, does the "task" of prompting the masses to put forward concrete demands promising palpable results call for special efforts to create a stable, centralized, militant organization of revolutionaries? Cannot such a "task" be carried out even by masses who do not "struggle with the political police"? Moreover, can this task be fulfilled unless, in addition to the few leaders, it is undertaken by the workers (the overwhelming majority), who in fact are *incapable* of "fighting against the political police"? Such workers, average people of the masses, are capable of displaying enormous energy and self-sacrifice in strikes and in street battles with the police and troops, and are capable (in fact, are alone capable) of *determining* the whole outcome of our movement—but the struggle against the *political* police requires special qualities; it requires *professional* revolutionaries. And we must not only see to it that the masses "advance" concrete demands, but also that the masses of the workers "advance" an increasing number of such professional revolutionaries from their own ranks. Thus we have reached the question of the relation between an organization of professional revolutionaries and the pure and simple labour movement. Although this question has found little reflection in literature, it has greatly engaged us "politicians" in conversations and controversies with those comrades who gravitate more or less towards Economism. It is a question that deserves special treatment. But before taking it up we shall deal with one other quotation in order to il-

lustrate the position we hold in regard to the connection between primitiveness and Economism.

In his *Reply*, N. N. wrote: "The 'Emancipation of Labour Group' demands direct struggle against the government without first considering where the material forces for this struggle are to be obtained, and without indicating '*the path of the struggle*.'" Emphasizing the last words, the author adds the following footnote to the word "path": "This cannot be explained by the conspiratorial aims pursued, because the program does not refer to secret plotting but to a *mass movement*. The masses cannot proceed by secret paths. Can we conceive of a secret strike? Can we conceive of secret demonstrations and petitions?" (*Vademecum*, p. 59.) Thus, the author approaches quite closely to the question of the "material forces" (organizers of strikes and demonstrations) and to the "paths" of the struggle, but, nevertheless, is still in a state of consternation, because he "worships" the mass movement, *i.e.*, he regards it as something that *relieves* us of the necessity of carrying on revolutionary activity and not as something that should embolden us and *stimulate* our revolutionary activity. Secret strikes are impossible—for those who take a direct and immediate part in them, but a strike may remain (and in the majority of cases does remain) a "secret" to the masses of the Russian workers, because the government takes care to cut all communication between strikers, takes care to prevent all news of strikes from spreading. Now here indeed is a special "struggle with the political police" required, a struggle that can never be conducted by such large masses as usually take part in strikes. Such a struggle must be organized, according to "all the rules of the art," by people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity. The fact that the masses are spontaneously entering the movement does not make the organization of this struggle *less necessary*. On the contrary, it makes it *more necessary*; for we Socialists would be failing in our duty to the masses if we did not prevent the police from making a secret of (and if we did not ourselves sometimes secretly prepare) every strike and every demonstration. *And we shall succeed in doing this,* precisely because the spontaneously awakening masses will *also advance from their own ranks* increasing numbers of "professional revolutionaries" (that is, if we are not so foolish as to advise the workers to keep on marking time).

C. *Organization of Workers and Organization of Revolutionaries*

It is only natural that a Social-Democrat, who conceives the political struggle as being identical with the "economic struggle against the employers and the government," should conceive of an "organization of revolutionaries" as being more or less identical with an "organization of workers." And this, in fact, is what actually happens; so that when we talk about organization, we literally talk in different tongues. I recall a conversation I once

had with a fairly consistent Economist, with whom I had not been previously acquainted. We were discussing the pamphlet *Who Will Make the Political Revolution?* and we were very soon agreed that the principal defect in that brochure was that it ignored the question of organization. We were beginning to think that we were in complete agreement with each other—but as the conversation proceeded, it became clear that we were talking of different things. My interlocutor accused the author of the brochure just mentioned of ignoring strike funds, mutual aid societies, etc.; whereas I had in mind an organization of revolutionaries as an essential factor in "making" the political revolution. After that became clear, I hardly remember a single question of importance upon which I was in agreement with that Economist!

What was the source of our disagreement? The fact that on questions of organization and politics the Economists are forever lapsing from Social-Democracy into trade unionism. The political struggle carried on by the Social-Democrats is far more extensive and complex than the economic struggle the workers carry on against the employers and the government. Similarly (and indeed for that reason), the organization of a revolutionary Social-Democratic Party must inevitably *differ* from the organizations of the workers designed for the latter struggle. A workers' organization must in the first place be a trade organization; secondly, it must be as wide as possible; and thirdly, it must be as public as conditions will allow (here, and further on, of course, I have only autocratic Russia in mind). On the other hand, the organizations of revolutionaries must consist first and foremost of people whose profession is that of a revolutionary (that is why I speak of organizations of *revolutionaries*, meaning revolutionary Social-Democrats). In view of this common feature of the members of such an organization, *all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals,* and certainly distinctions of trade and profession, must be obliterated. Such an organization must of necessity be not too extensive and as secret as possible. Let us examine this threefold distinction.

In countries where political liberty exists the distinction between a trade union and a political organization is clear, as is the distinction between trade unions and Social-Democracy. The relation of the latter to the former will naturally vary in each country according to historical, legal and other conditions—it may be more or less close or more or less complex (in our opinion it should be as close and simple as possible); but trade union organizations are certainly not in the least identical with the Social-Democratic Party organizations in free countries. In Russia, however, the yoke of autocracy appears at first glance to obliterate all distinctions between a Social-Democratic organization and trade unions, because *all* workers' associations and *all* circles are prohibited, and because the principal manifestation and weapon of the workers' economic struggle—the strike—is regarded as a criminal offence (and sometimes even as a political offence!). Conditions in our country, therefore, strongly "impel" the workers who are

conducting the economic struggle to concern themselves with political questions. They also "impel" the Social-Democrats to confuse trade unionism with Social-Democracy (and our Krichevskys, Martynovs and their like, while speaking enthusiastically of the first kind of "impelling," fail to observe the "impelling" of the second kind). Indeed, picture to yourselves the people who are immersed ninety-nine per cent in "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." Some of them have never, during the *whole* course of their activity (four to six months), thought of the need for a more complex organization of revolutionaries, others, perhaps, come across the fairly widely distributed Bernsteinian literature, from which they become convinced of the profound importance of the forward march of "the drab every-day struggle." Still others are carried away, perhaps, by the seductive idea of showing the world a new example of "close and organic contact with the proletarian struggle" — contact between the trade union and Social-Democratic movements. Such people would perhaps argue that the later a country enters into the arena of capitalism and, consequently, of the labour movement, the more the Socialists in that country may take part in, and support, the trade union movement, and the less reason is there for non-Social-Democratic trade unions. So far, the argument is absolutely correct; unfortunately, however, some go beyond that and hint at the complete fusion of Social-Democracy with trade unionism. We shall soon see, from the example of the rules of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, what a harmful effect these dreams have upon our plans of organization.

The workers' organizations for the economic struggle should be trade union organizations. Every Social-Democratic worker should as far as possible assist and actively work inside these organizations. That is true. But it is not to our interest to demand that only Social-Democrats should be eligible for membership in the trade unions, for this would only restrict our influence over the masses. Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the trade unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be unattainable unless they were very *wide* organizations. And the wider these organizations are, the wider our influence over them will be—an influence due not only to the "spontaneous" development of the economic struggle but also to the direct and conscious effort of the Socialist trade union members to influence their comrades. But a wide organization cannot apply the methods of strict secrecy (since the latter demands far greater training than is required for the economic struggle). How is the contradiction between the need for a large membership and the need for strictly secret methods to be reconciled? How are we to make the trade unions as public as possible? Generally speaking, there are perhaps only two ways to this end: either the trade unions become legalized (which in some countries precedes the legalization of the Socialist and political unions), or the organization is kept a secret one, but so "free" and amorphous, *lose* as the Germans say, that the need for secret methods becomes almost negligible as far as the bulk of the members is concerned.

The legalization of the non-Socialist and non-political labour unions in Russia has already begun, and there is no doubt that every advance our rapidly growing Social-Democratic working-class movement makes will increase and encourage the attempts at legalization. These attempts proceed for the most part from supporters of the existing order, but they will proceed also from the workers themselves and from the liberal intellectuals. The banner of legality has already been unfurled by the Vassilyevs and the Zubatovs. Support has been promised by the Ozerovs and the Wormses, and followers of the new tendency are to be found among the workers. Henceforth, we must reckon with this tendency. How are we to reckon with it? There can be no two opinions about this among Social-Democrats. We must constantly expose any part played in this movement by the Zubatovs and the Vassilyevs, the gendarmes and the priests, and explain to the workers what their real intentions are. We must also expose the conciliatory, "harmonious" undertones that will be heard in the speeches delivered by liberal politicians at the legal meetings of the workers, irrespective of whether they proceed from an earnest conviction of the desirability of peaceful class collaboration, whether they proceed from a desire to curry favour with the employers, or are simply the result of clumsiness. We must also warn the workers against the traps often set by the police, who at such open meetings and permitted societies spy out the "hotheads" and who, through the medium of the legal organizations, endeavour to plant their *agents provocateurs* in the illegal organizations.

But while doing all this, we must not forget that *in the long run* the legalization of the working-class movement will be to our advantage, and not to that of the Zubatovs. On the contrary, our campaign of exposure will help to separate the tares from the wheat. What the tares are, we have already indicated. By the wheat, we mean attracting the attention of still larger and more backward sections of the workers to social and political questions, and freeing ourselves, the revolutionaries, from functions which are essentially legal (the distribution of legal books, mutual aid, etc.), the development of which will inevitably provide us with an increasing quantity of material for agitation. In this sense, we may say, and we should say, to the Zubatovs and the Ozerovs: keep at it, gentlemen, do your best! When you place a trap in the path of the workers (either by way of direct provocation, or by the "honest" corruption of the workers with the aid of "Struve-ism"), we shall see to it that you are exposed. But whenever you take a real step forward, even if it is the most timid zigzag, we shall say: please continue! And the only step that can be a real step forward is a real, if small, extension of the workers' field of action. Every such extension will be to our advantage and will help to hasten the advent of legal societies, not of the kind in which *agents provocateurs* hunt for Socialists, but of the kind in which Socialists will hunt for adherents. In a word, our task is to fight down the tares. It is not our business to grow wheat in flower pots. By pulling up the tares, we clear the soil for the

wheat. And while the old-fashioned folk are tending their flower-pot crops, we must prepare reapers, not only to cut down the tares of today, but also to reap the wheat of to-morrow.

Legalization, therefore, will *not solve* the problem of creating a trade union organization that will be as public and as extensive as possible (but we would be extremely glad if the Zubatovs and the Ozerovs provided even a partial opportunity for such a solution—to which end we must fight them as strenuously as possible!). There only remains the path of secret trade union organization; and *we must* offer all possible assistance to the workers, who (as we definitely know) are already adopting this path. Trade union organizations may not only be of tremendous value in developing and consolidating the economic struggle, but may also become a very important auxiliary to political agitation and revolutionary organization. In order to achieve this purpose, and in order to guide the nascent trade union movement in the direction the Social-Democrats desire, we must first fully understand the foolishness of the plan of organization with which the St. Petersburg Economists have been occupying themselves for nearly five years. That plan is described in the "Rules for a Workers' Benefit Fund" of July 1897 (*Listok Rabotnika,* No. 9-10, p. 46, in *Rabochaya Mysl,* No. 1), and also in the "Rules for a Trade Union Workers' Organization," of October 1900. (Special leaflet printed in St. Petersburg and quoted in *Iskra,* No. 1.) The fundamental error contained in both these sets of rules is that they give a detailed formulation of a wide workers' organization and confuse the latter with the organization of revolutionaries. Let us take the last-mentioned set of rules, since it is drawn up in greater detail. The body of it consists of *fifty-two* paragraphs. Twenty-three paragraphs deal with structure, the method of conducting business and the competence of the "workers' circles," which are to be organized in every factory ("not more than ten persons") and which elect "central (factory) groups." "The central group," says paragraph 2, "observes all that goes on in its factory or workshop and keeps a record of events." "The central group presents to subscribers a monthly report on the state of the funds" (par. 17), etc. Ten paragraphs are devoted to the "district organization," and nineteen to the highly complex interconnection between the "Committee of the Workers' Organization" and the "Committee of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle" (delegates from each district and from the "executive groups"—"groups of propagandists, groups for maintaining contact with the provinces and with the organization abroad, and for managing stores, publications and funds").

Social-Democracy="executive groups" in relation to the economic struggle of the workers! It would be difficult to find a more striking illustration than this of how the Economists' ideas deviate from Social-Democracy to trade unionism, and how foreign to them is the idea that a Social-Democrat must concern himself first and foremost with an organization of revolutionaries, capable of guiding the *whole* proletarian struggle for

emancipation. To talk of "the political emancipation of the working class" and the struggle against "tsarist despotism," and at the same time to draft rules like these, indicates a complete failure to understand what the real political tasks of Social-Democracy are. Not one of the fifty or so paragraphs reveals the slightest glimmer of understanding that it is necessary to conduct the widest possible political agitation among the masses, an agitation that deals with every phase of Russian absolutism and with every aspect of the various social classes in Russia. Rules like these are of no use even for the achievement of trade union aims, let alone political aims, for that requires organization *according to trade,* and yet the rules do not contain a single reference to this.

But most characteristic of all, perhaps, is the amazing top-heaviness of the whole "system," which attempts to bind every factory with the "committee" by a permanent string of uniform and ludicrously petty rules and a three-stage system of election. Hemmed in by the narrow outlook of Economism, the mind is lost in details which positively reek of red tape and bureaucracy. In practice, of course, three-fourths of the clauses are never applied; on the other hand, however, a "conspiratorial organization of this kind, with its central group in each factory, makes it very easy for the gendarmes to carry out raids on a large scale. Our Polish comrades have already passed through a similar phase in their own movement, when everybody was extremely enthusiastic about the extensive organization of workers' funds; but they very quickly abandoned these ideas when they became convinced that such organizations only provided rich harvests for the gendarmes. If we are out for wide workers' organizations, and not for wide arrests, if it is not our purpose to provide satisfaction to the gendarmes, these organizations must remain absolutely loose. But will they be able to function? Well, let us see what the functions are: "...to observe all that goes on in the factory and keep a record of events." (Par. 2 of the Rules.) Do we need a special group for this? Could not the purpose be better served by correspondence conducted in the illegal papers and without setting up special groups? "...to lead the struggles of the workers for the improvement of their workshop conditions." (Par. 3 of the Rules). This, too, requires no special group. Any agitator with any intelligence at all can gather what demands the workers want to advance in the course of ordinary conversation and transmit them to a narrow—not a wide—organization of revolutionaries to be embodied in a leaflet. "... to organize a fund ... to which subscriptions of two kopeks per ruble* should be made" (par. 9) ... to present monthly reports to subscribers on the state of the funds (par. 17) ... to expel members who fail to pay their subscriptions (par. 10), and so forth. Why, this is a very paradise for the police; for nothing would be easier than for them to penetrate into the ponderous secrecy of a "central factory fund," confiscate the money and arrest the

* Of wages earned—*Ed.*

best members. Would it not be simpler to issue one-kopek or two-kopek coupons bearing the official stamp of a well-known (very exclusive and very secret) organization, or to make collections without coupons of any kind and to print reports in a certain agreed code in the illegal paper? The object would thereby be attained, but it would be a hundred times more difficult for the gendarmes to pick up clues.

I could go on analysing the rules, but I think that what has been said will suffice. A small, compact core, consisting of reliable, experienced and hardened workers, with responsible agents in the principal districts and connected by all the rules of strict secrecy with the organizations of revolutionaries, can, with the wide support of the masses and without an elaborate organization, perform *all* the functions of a trade union organization, and perform them, moreover, in the manner Social-Democrats desire. Only in this way can we secure the *consolidation* and development of a *Social-Democratic* trade union movement, in spite of the gendarmes.

It may be objected that an organization which is so loose that it is not even definitely formed, and which even has no enrolled and registered members, cannot be called an organization at all. That may very well be. I am not out for names. But this "organization without members" can do everything that is required, and will, from the very outset, guarantee the closest contact between our future trade unions and Socialism. Only an incorrigible utopian would want a *wide* organization of workers, with elections, reports, universal suffrage, etc., under the autocracy.

The moral to be drawn from this is a simple one. If we begin with the solid foundation of a strong organization of revolutionaries, we can guarantee the stability of the movement as a whole and carry out the aims of both Social-Democracy and of trade unionism. If, however, we begin with a wide workers' organization, supposed to be most "accessible" to the masses, when as a matter of fact it will be most accessible to the gendarmes and will make the revolutionaries most accessible to the police, we shall achieve the aims neither of Social-Democracy nor of trade unionism; we shall not escape from our primitiveness, and because we constantly remain scattered and broken up, we shall make only the trade unions of the Zubatov and Ozerov type most accessible to the masses.

What, properly speaking, should be the functions of the organization of revolutionaries? We shall deal with this in detail. But first let us examine a very typical argument advanced by the terrorist, who (sad fate!) in this matter also is a next-door neighbour to the Economist. *Svoboda* (No. 1), a journal published for workers, contains an article entitled "Organization," the author of which tries to defend his friends, the Economist workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk. He writes:

> "It is a bad thing when the crowd is mute and unenlightened, and when the movement does not proceed from the rank and file. For instance, the students of a university town leave for their homes during

the summer and other vacations and immediately the workers' movement comes to a standstill. Can a workers' movement which has to be pushed on from outside be a real force? Of course not! ... It has not yet learned *to* walk, *it is still in leading strings. So it is everywhere.* The students go off, and everything comes to a standstill. As soon as the cream is skimmed—the milk turns sour. If the 'committee' is arrested, everything comes to a standstill until a new one can be formed. And one never knows what sort of committee will be set up next—it may be nothing like the former one. The first preached one thing, the second may preach the very *opposite*. The *continuity between yesterday* and to-morrow is broken, the experience of the past does not enlighten the future. And all this is because no deep roots have been struck in the crowd; because, instead of having a hundred fools at work, we have a dozen wise men. A dozen wise men can be wiped out at a snap, but when the organization embraces the crowd; everything will proceed from the crowd and nobody, however zealous, can stop the cause." (P. 63.)

The facts are described correctly. The above quotation presents a fairly good picture of our primitive methods. But the conclusions drawn from it are worthy of *Rabochaya Mysl* both for their stupidity and their political tactlessness. They represent the height of stupidity, because the author confuses *the philosophical and social-historical question of the "depth" of the* "roots" of the movement with the technical and organizational question of the best method of fighting the gendarmes. They represent the height of political tactlessness, because the author, instead of appealing from the bad leaders to the good leaders, appeals from the leaders in general to the "crowd." This is as much an attempt to drag the movement back organizationally as the idea of substituting excitative terrorism for political agitation is an attempt to drag it back politically. Indeed, I am experiencing a veritable *embarras de richesses*, and hardly know where to begin to disentangle the confusion *Svoboda* has introduced in this subject. For the sake of clarity, I shall begin by quoting an example. Take the Germans. It will not be denied, I hope, that the German organizations embrace the crowd, that in Germany everything proceeds from the crowd, that the working-class movement there has learned to walk. Yet observe how this vast crowd of millions values its "dozen" tried political leaders, how firmly it clings to them! Members of the hostile parties in parliament often tease the Socialists by exclaiming: "Fine democrats you are indeed! Your movement is a working-class movement only in name; as a matter of fact, it is the same clique of leaders that is always in evidence, Bebel and Liebknecht, year in and year out, and that goes on for decades. Your deputies who are supposed to be *elected* from among the workers are more permanent than the officials appointed by the Emperor!" But the Germans only smile with contempt at these demagogic attempts to set the "crowd" against the "leaders," to arouse

bad and ambitious instincts in the former, and to rob the movement of its solidity and stability by undermining the confidence of the masses in their "dozen wise men." The political ideas of the Germans have already developed sufficiently and they have acquired enough political experience to enable them to understand that without the "dozen" tried and talented leaders (and talented men are not born by the hundred), professionally trained, schooled by long experience and working in perfect harmony, no class in modern society is capable of conducting a determined struggle. The Germans have had demagogues in their ranks who have flattered the "hundred fools," exalted them above the "dozen wise men," extolled the "mighty fists" of the masses, and (like Most and Hasselmann) have spurred them on to reckless "revolutionary" action and sown distrust towards the firm and steadfast leaders. It was only by stubbornly and bitterly combating every element of demagogy within the Socialist movement that German Socialism managed to grow and become as strong as it is. Our wiseacres, however, at the very moment when Russian Social-Democracy is passing through a crisis entirely due to our lack of sufficient numbers of trained, developed and experienced leaders to guide the spontaneous ferment of the masses, cry out with the profundity of fools, "it is a bad thing when the movement does not proceed from the rank and file."

"A committee of students is no good, it is not stable." Quite true. But the conclusion that should be drawn from this is that we must have a committee of professional *revolutionaries* and it does not matter whether a student or a worker is capable of qualifying himself as a professional revolutionary. The conclusion you draw, however, is that the working-class movement must not be pushed on from outside! In your political innocence you fail to observe that you are playing into the hands of our Economists and fostering our primitiveness. In what way, I would like to ask, did the students "push on" the workers? *Solely* by the student bringing to the worker the scraps of political knowledge he himself possessed, the crumbs of Socialist ideas he had managed to acquire (for the principal intellectual diet of the present-day student, "legal Marxism," can furnish only the A B C, only the crumbs of knowledge). There has never been too much of *such* "pushing on from outside," on the contrary, so far there has been too little, all too little of it in our movement; we have been stewing in our own juice far too long; we have bowed far too slavishly before the spontaneous "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government." We professional revolutionaries must make it our business and we will make it our business to continue *this kind* of "pushing" a hundred times more forcibly than we have done hitherto. The very fact that you select so despicable a phrase as "pushing on from outside"—a phrase which cannot but rouse in the workers (at least in the workers who are as ignorant as you yourselves are) a sense of distrust towards *all* who bring them political knowledge and revolutionary experience from outside, and rouse

in them an instinctive hostility to *all* such péople—proves that you are *demagogues,* and a demagogue is the worst enemy of the working class.

Oh! Don't start howling about my "uncomradely methods" of controversy. I have not the least intention of casting aspersions upon the purity of your intentions. As I have already said, one may become a demagogue out of sheer political innocence. But I have shown that you have descended to demagogy, and I shall never tire of repeating that demagogues are the worst enemies of the working class. They are the worst enemies of the working class because they arouse bad instincts in the crowd, because the ignorant worker is unable to recognize his enemies in men who represent themselves, and sometimes sincerely represent themselves, to be his friends. They are the worst enemies of the working class because in this period of dispersion and vacillation, when our movement is just beginning to take shape, nothing is easier than to employ demagogic methods to side-track the crowd, which can realize its mistake only by bitter experience. That is why the slogan of the day for Russian Social-Democrats must be: resolute opposition to *Svoboda* and *Rabocheye Dyelo,* both of which have sunk to the level of demagogy. We shall return to this subject again.*

"A dozen wise men can be more easily wiped out than a hundred fools!" This wonderful truth (for which the hundred fools will always applaud you) appears obvious only because in the very midst of the argument you have skipped from one question to another. You began by talking, and continued to talk, of wiping out a "committee," of wiping out an "organization," and now you skip to the question of getting hold of the "roots" of the movement in the "depths." The fact is, of course, that our movement cannot be wiped out precisely because it has hundreds and hundreds of thousands of roots deep down among the masses; but that is not the point we are discussing. As far as "deep roots" are concerned, we cannot be "wiped out" even now, in spite of all our primitiveness, but we all complain, and cannot but complain, that "*organizations*" are wiped out, with the result that it is impossible to maintain continuity in the movement. If you agree to discuss the question of wiping out the *organizations* and to stick to that question, then I assert that it is far more difficult to wipe out a dozen wise men than a hundred fools. And this position I shall defend no matter how much you instigate the crowd against me for my "anti-democratic" views, etc. As I have already said, by "wise men," in connection with organization, I mean *professional revolutionaries,* irrespective of whether they are trained from among students or workingmen. I assert: 1) that no movement can endure without a stable organization of leaders that maintains continuity; 2) that the wider the masses spontaneously drawn into the struggle, forming the

* For the moment we shall observe merely that our remarks on "pushing on from outside" and the other views on organization expressed by *Svoboda* apply *entirely* to *all* the Economists, including the adherents of *Rabocheye Dyelo,* for either they themselves have preached and defended such views on organization, or have themselves drifted into them.

basis of the movement and participating in it, the more urgent the need of such an organization, and the more solid this organization must be (for it is much easier for demagogues to sidetrack the more backward sections of the masses); 3) that such an organization must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity; 4) that in an autocratic state the more we *confine* the membership of such an organization to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to wipe out such an organization, and 5) the *greater* will be the number of people of the working class and of other classes of society who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it.

I invite our Economists, terrorists and "Economists-terrorists"* to confute these propositions. At the moment, I shall deal only with the last two points. The question as to whether it is easier to wipe out "a dozen wise men" or "a hundred fools" reduces itself to the question we have considered above, namely, whether it is possible to have a mass *organization* when the maintenance of strict secrecy is essential. We can never give a mass organization that degree of secrecy which is essential for the persistent and continuous struggle against the government. But to concentrate all secret functions in the hands of as small a number of professional revolutionaries as possible does not mean that the latter will "do the thinking for all" and that the crowd will not take an active part in the *movement.* On the contrary, the crowd will advance from its ranks increasing numbers of professional revolutionaries; for it will know that it is not enough for a few students and workingmen, waging economic war, to gather together and form a "committee," but that it takes years to train oneself to be a professional revolutionary; the crowd will "think" not of primitive methods alone but of this particular type of training. The centralization of the secret functions of the *organization* does not mean the centralization of all the functions of the *movement.* The active participation of the broad masses in the dissemination of illegal literature will not diminish because a "dozen" professional revolutionaries centralize the secret part of the work; on the contrary, it will *increase tenfold.* Only in this way will the reading of illegal literature, the contribution to illegal literature and to some extent even the

* This latter term is perhaps more applicable to *Svoboda* than the former, for in an article entitled "The Regeneration of Revolutionism" it defends terrorism, while in the article at present under review it defends Economism. One might say of *Svoboda* that "it would if it could, but it can't." Its wishes and intentions are excellent—but the result is utter confusion; and this is chiefly due to the fact that while *Svoboda* advocates continuity of organization, it refuses to recognize the continuity of revolutionary thought and of Social-Democratic theory. It wants to revive the professional revolutionary ("The Regeneration of Revolutionism"), and to that end proposes, first, excitative terrorism, and secondly, "the organization of the average worker" (*Svoboda,* No. 1, p. 66 *et seq.*), because he will be less likely to be "pushed on from outside." In other words, it proposes to pull the house down to use the timber for warming it.

distribution of illegal literature *almost cease to be secret work*, for the police will soon come to realize the folly and futility of setting the whole judicial and administrative machine into motion to intercept every copy of a publication that is being broadcast in thousands. This applies not only to the press, but to every function of the movement, even to demonstrations. The active and widespread participation of the masses will not suffer: on the contrary, it will benefit by the fact that a "dozen" experienced revolutionaries, no less professionally trained than the police, will centralize all the secret side of the work—prepare leaflets, work out approximate plans and appoint bodies of leaders for each urban district, for each factory district and for each educational institution, etc. (I know that exception will be taken to my "undemocratic" views, but I shall reply fully to this altogether unintelligent objection later on.) The centralization of the more secret *functions in an organization of revolutionaries will not diminish, but rather* increase the extent and quality of the activity of a large number of other organizations which are intended for a broad public and are therefore as loose and as non-secret as possible, such as workers' trade unions, workers' circles for self-education and the reading of illegal literature, Socialist and democratic circles among *all* other sections of the population, etc., etc. We must have such circles, trade unions and organizations everywhere in *as large a number as possible* and with the widest variety of functions; but it would be absurd and dangerous to *confuse* them with the organization of *revolutionaries*, to obliterate the border line between them, to dim still more the masses' already incredibly hazy appreciation of the fact that in order to "serve" the mass movement we must have people who will devote themselves exclusively to Social-Democratic activities, and that such people must *train* themselves patiently and steadfastly to be professional revolutionaries.

Aye, this appreciation has become incredibly dim. The most grievous sin we have committed in regard to organization is that *by our primitiveness we have lowered the prestige of revolutionaries in Russia.* A man who is weak and vacillating on theoretical questions, who has a narrow outlook, who makes excuses for his own slackness on the ground that the masses are awakening spontaneously, who resembles a trade union secretary more than a people's tribune, who is unable to conceive of a broad and bold plan that would command the respect even of opponents and who is inexperienced and clumsy in his own professional art—the art of combating the political police—such a man is not a revolutionary but a wretched amateur!

Let no active worker take offence at these frank remarks, for as far as insufficient training is concerned, I apply them first and foremost to myself. I used to work in a circle* that set itself great and all-embracing tasks; and every member of that circle suffered to the point of torture from the realization that we were proving ourselves to be amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say, paraphrasing a well-known

* Lenin refers to his own work in St. Petersburg in 1893-95.—*Ed.*

epigram: "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we shall overturn the whole of Russia!" And the more I recall the burning sense of shame I then experienced, the more bitter are my feelings towards those pseudo-Social-Democrats whose teachings "bring disgrace on the calling of a revolutionary," who fail to understand that our task is not to champion degrading the revolutionary to the level of an amateur, but to *exalt* the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries.

D. The Scope of Organizational Work

We have already heard from B—v about "the lack of revolutionary forces fit for action which is felt not only in St. Petersburg, but throughout the whole of Russia." No one, we suppose, will dispute this fact. But the question is, how is it to be explained? B—v writes:

> "We shall not enter in detail into the historical causes of this phenomenon; we shall state merely that a society, demoralized by prolonged political reaction and split by past and present economic changes, advances from its own ranks *an extremely small number of persons fit for revolutionary work*; that the working class does advance from its own ranks revolutionary workers who to some extent reinforce the ranks of the illegal organizations, but that the number of such revolutionaries is inadequate to meet the requirements of the times. This is more particularly the case because the worker engaged for eleven and a half hours a day in the factory is mainly able to fulfil the functions of an agitator; but propaganda and organization, delivery and reproduction of illegal literature, issuing leaflets, etc., are duties which must necessarily fall mainly upon the shoulders of an extremely small force of intellectuals." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, pp. 38-39.)

There are many points in the above upon which we disagree with B—v, particularly with those points we have emphasized, and which most strikingly reveal that, although weary of our primitive methods (as every practical worker who thinks over the position would be), B—v cannot find the way out of this intolerable situation, because he is so ground down by Economism. It is not true to say that society advances few persons from its ranks fit for "work." It advances *very many*, but we are unable to make use of them all. The critical, transitional state of our movement in this connection may be formulated as follows: *there are no people—yet there are enormous numbers of people*. There are enormous numbers of people, because the working class and the most diverse strata of society, year after year, advance from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest, who are ready to render all the assistance they can in the fight against absolutism, the intolerableness of which is not yet recognized by all, but is nevertheless more and more acutely sensed by increasing

masses of the people. At the same time we have no people, because we have no leaders, no political leaders, we have no talented organizers capable of organizing extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious work that would give employment to all forces, even the most inconsiderable. "*The growth and development of revolutionary organizations,*" not only lag behind the growth of the labour movement, which even B—v admits, but also behind the general democratic movement among all strata of the people (in passing, probably B—v would now admit this supplement to his conclusion). The scope of revolutionary work is too narrow compared with the breadth of the spontaneous basis of the movement. It is too hemmed in by the wretched "economic struggle against the employers and the *government*" *theory. And yet, at the present time, not only Social-Democratic* political agitators, but also Social-Democratic organizers must "go among all classes of the population."*

There is hardly a single practical worker who would have any doubt about the ability of Social-Democrats to distribute the thousand and one minute functions of their organizational work among the various representatives of the most varied classes. Lack of specialization is one of our most serious technical defects, about which B—v justly and bitterly complains. The smaller each separate "operation" in our common cause will be, the more people we shall find capable of carrying out such operations (people, who in the majority of cases, are not capable of becoming professional revolutionaries), the more difficult will it be for the police to "net" all these "detail workers," and the more difficult will it be for them to frame up, out of an arrest for some petty affair, a "case" that would justify the government's expenditure on the "secret service." As for the number ready to help us, we have already referred in the previous chapter to the gigantic change that has taken place in this respect in the last five years or so. On the other hand, in order to unite all these tiny fractions into *one whole, in order, in breaking up functions, to avoid breaking up the* movement, and in order to imbue those who carry out these minute functions with the conviction that their work is necessary and important, for without this they will never do the work,** it is necessary to have a strong organi-

* For example, in military circles an undoubted revival of the democratic spirit has recently been observed, partly as a consequence of the frequent street fights that now take place against "enemies" like workers and students. And as soon as our available forces permit, we must without fail devote serious attention to propaganda and agitation among soldiers and officers, and to the creation of "military organizations" affiliated to our Party.

** I recall the story a comrade related to me of a factory inspector, who, desiring to help, and while in fact helping the Social Democrats, bitterly complained that he did *not know whether the "information" he sent reached the proper revolutionary* quarter; he did not know how much his help was really required, and what possibilities there were for utilizing his small services. Every practical worker, of course, knows of more than one case, similar to this, of our primitiveness depriving us of *allies* And these services, each "small" in itself, but incalculable when taken in the mass, could be rendered to us by office employees and officials not only in *factories, but in*

zation of tried revolutionaries. The more secret such an organization would be, the stronger and more widespread would be the confidence of the masses in the Party, and, as we know, in time of war, it is not only of great importance to imbue one's own army with confidence in its own strength, it is important also to convince the enemy and all *neutral* elements of this strength; friendly neutrality may sometimes decide the issue. If such an organization existed, an organization built up on a firm theoretical foundation and possessing a Social-Democratic journal, we would have no reason to fear that the movement would be diverted from its path by the numerous "outside" elements that are attracted to it. (On the contrary, it is precisely at the present time, when primitive methods prevail among us, that many Social-Democrats are observed to gravitate towards the *Credo*, and only imagine that they are Social-Democrats.) In a word, specialization necessarily presupposes centralization, and in its turn imperatively calls for it.

But B—v himself, who has so excellently described the necessity for specialization, underestimates its importance, in our opinion, in the second part of the argument that we have quoted. The number of working-class revolutionaries is inadequate, he says. This is absolutely true, and once again we assert that the "valuable communication of a close observer" fully confirms our view of the causes of the present crisis in Social-Democracy, and, consequently, confirms our view of the means for removing these causes. Not only are revolutionaries lagging behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses generally, but even working-class revolutionaries are lagging behind the spontaneous awakening of the working-class masses. And this *fact* most strikingly confirms, even from the "practical" point of view, not only the absurdity but even the *political reactionariness* of the "pedagogics" to which we are so often treated when discussing our duties to the workers. This fact proves that our very first and most imperative duty is to help to train working-class revolutionaries who will be on the same level *in regard to Party activity* as the revolutionaries from amongst the intellectuals (we emphasize the words "in regard to Party activity," because although it is necessary, it is not so easy and not so imperative to bring the workers up to the level of intellectuals in other respects). Therefore, attention must be devoted *principally* to the task of *raising* the workers to the level of revolutionaries, and not to *degrading* ourselves to the level of the "labour masses" as the Economists wish to do, or necessarily to

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the postal service, on the railways, in the Customs, among the nobility, among the clergy and *every other* walk of life, including even in the police service and at Court! Had we a real party, a real militant organization of revolutionaries, we would not put the question bluntly to every one of these "abettors," we would not hasten in every single case to bring them right into the very heart of our "illegality," but, on the contrary, we would husband them very carefully and would train people especially for such functions, bearing in mind the fact that many students could be of much greater service to the Party as "abettors"—officials—than as "short-term" revolutionaries. But, I repeat, only an organization that is already established and has no lack of active forces would have the right to apply such tactics.

the level of the "average worker," as *Svoboda* desires to do (and by this raises itself to the second grade of Economist "pedagogics"). I am far from denying the necessity for popular literature for the workers, and especially popular (but, of course, not vulgar) literature for the especially backward workers. But what annoys me is that pedagogics is constantly confused with questions of politics and organization. You, gentlemen, who are so much concerned about the "average worker," as a matter of fact, rather insult the workers by your desire to *talk down* to them when discussing labour politics and labour organization. Talk about serious things in a serious manner; leave pedagogics to the pedagogues, and not to politicians and to organizers! Are there not advanced people, "average people," and "masses," among the intelligentsia? Does not everyone recognize that popular literature is required also for the intelligentsia and is not such literature written? Just imagine someone, in an article on organizing college or high-school students, repeating over and over again, as if he had made a new discovery, that first of all we must have an organization of "average students." The author of such an article would rightly be laughed at. He would be told: give us your ideas on organization, if you have any, and we ourselves will settle the question as to which of us are "average," as to who is higher and who is lower. But if you have no organizational ideas *of your own*, then all your chatter about "masses" and "average" is simply boring. Try to understand that these questions about "politics" and "organization" are so serious in themselves that they cannot be dealt with in any other but a serious way. We can and must *educate* workers (and university and high school students) so as to *be able to discuss* these questions with them; and once you do bring up these questions for discussion, then give real replies to them, do not fall back on the "average," or on the "masses"; don't evade them by quoting adages or mere phrases.*

In order to be fully prepared for his task, the working-class revolutionary must also become a professional revolutionary. Hence B—v is wrong when he says that as the worker is engaged for eleven and a half hours a day in the factory, therefore, the brunt of all the other revolutionary functions (apart from agitation) "*must necessarily* fall mainly upon the shoulders of an extremely small force of intellectuals." It need not "necessarily" be so. It is so because we are backward, because we do not recognize our duty to assist every capable worker to become a *professional* agitator, organizer, propagandist, literature distributor, etc., etc. In this respect, we waste our strength in a positively shameful manner; we lack the ability to husband

* *Svoboda*, No. 1, p. 66, in the article "Organization": "The heavy tread of the army of labour will reinforce all the demands that will be advanced by Russian Labour"—Labour with a capital L, of course. And this very author exclaims: "I am not in the least hostile towards the intelligentsia, but" (this is the very word, *but*, that Shchedrin translated as meaning: the ears never grow higher than the forehead, never!) "but it always frightfully annoys me when a man comes to me, utters beautiful and charming words and demands that they be accepted for their (his) beauty and other virtues." (P. 62.) Yes. This "always frightfully annoys" me too.

that which should be tended and reared with special care. Look at the Germans: they have a hundred times more forces than we have. But they understand perfectly well that the "average" does not too frequently promote really capable agitators, etc., from its ranks. Hence they immediately try to place every capable workingman in such conditions as will enable him to develop and apply his abilities to the utmost: he is made a professional agitator, he is encouraged to widen the field of his activity, to spread it from one factory to the whole of his trade, from one locality to the whole country. He acquires experience and dexterity in his profession, his outlook becomes wider, his knowledge increases, he observes the prominent political leaders from other localities and other parties, he strives to rise to their level and combine within himself the knowledge of working-class environment and freshness of Socialist convictions with professional skill, without which the proletariat *cannot* carry on a stubborn struggle with the excellently trained enemy. Only in this way can men of the stamp of Bebel and Auer be promoted from the ranks of the working class. But what takes place very largely automatically in a politically free country must in Russia be done deliberately and systematically by our organizations. A workingman agitator who is at all talented and "promising" *must not be left* to work eleven hours a day in a factory. We must arrange that he be maintained by the Party, that he may in due time go underground, that he change the place of his activity, otherwise he will not enlarge his experience, he will not widen his outlook, and will not be able to stay in the fight against the gendarmes for at least a few years. As the spontaneous rise of the working-class masses becomes wider and deeper, they not only promote from their ranks an increasing number of talented agitators, but also of talented organizers, propagandists and "practical workers" in the best sense of the term (of whom there are so few among our intelligentsia who, in the majority of cases, are somewhat careless and sluggish in their habits, so characteristic of Russians). When we have detachments of specially trained working-class revolutionaries who have gone through long years of preparation (and, of course, revolutionaries "of all arms"), no political police in the world will be able to contend against them, for these detachments of men absolutely devoted and loyal to the revolution will themselves enjoy the absolute confidence and devotion of the broad masses of the workers. The *sin* we commit is that we do not sufficiently "stimulate" the workers to take this path, "common" to them and to the "intellectuals," of professional revolutionary training, and that we too frequently drag them back by our silly speeches about what "can be understood" by the masses of the workers, by the "average workers," etc.

In this, as in other cases, the narrowness of our field of organizational work is without a doubt directly due (although the overwhelming majority of the "Economists" and the novices in practical work do not appreciate it) to the fact that we restrict our theories and our political tasks to a narrow field. Bowing in worship to spontaneity seems to inspire a fear of taking

even one step away from what "can be understood" by the masses, a fear of rising too high above mere subservience to the immediate and direct requirements of the masses. Have no fear, gentlemen! Remember that we stand so low on the plane of organization that the very idea that we could rise *too high* is absurd!

E. "Conspirative" Organization and "Democracy"

And yet there are many people among us who are so sensitive to the "voice of life" that they fear it more than anything in the world and accuse those who adhere to the views here expounded of "Narodnaya Volya"-ism, of failing to understand "democracy," etc. We must deal with these accusations, which, of course, have been echoed by *Rabocheye Dyelo*.

The writer of these lines knows very well that the St. Petersburg Economists even accused *Rabochaya Gazeta* of being Narodnaya Volya-ite (which is quite understandable when one compares it with *Rabochaya Mysl*). We were not in the least surprised, therefore, when, soon after the appearance of *Iskra*, a comrade informed us that the Social-Democrats in the town of X describe *Iskra* as a "Narodnaya Volya"-ite journal. We, of course, were flattered by this accusation. What real Social-Democrat has not been accused by the Economists of being a Narodnaya Volya-ite?

These accusations are called forth by a twofold misunderstanding. First, the history of the revolutionary movement is so little known among us that the very idea of a militant centralized organization which declares a determined war upon tsarism is described as "Narodnaya Volya"-ite. But the magnificent organization that the revolutionaries had in the 'seventies, and which should serve us all as a model, was not formed by the Narodnaya Volya-ites but by the adherents of *Zemlya i Volya*,* who split up into Chorny Peredel-ites and Narodnaya Volya-ites. Consequently, to regard a militant revolutionary organization as something specifically Narodnaya Volya-ite is absurd both historically and logically, because *no* revolutionary

* *Zemlya i Volya*-ites or *Narodniks*—members of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary organization *Zemlya i Volya* (*Land and Freedom*) founded in 1876. The *Zemlya i Volya*-ites held the erroneous view that the main revolutionary force in the country was the peasantry and not the working class, that the road to Socialism led through the peasant commune, and that it was possible to overthrow the rule of the tsar and the landlords only by means of peasant "mutinies." In order to raise the peasantry against tsarism they made for the villages, "went among the people" (people, in Russian, *narod*, hence Narodniks) and expounded their views. But the peasants neither understood them nor were willing to follow them, whereupon they resolved to continue the struggle against autocracy without the people, with their own forces, by means of the assassination of individual representatives of the autocracy. A struggle arose within the ranks of *Zemlya i Volya* between the advocates of new methods of struggle and the followers of the old Narodnik tactics, which led in 1879 to a split of the party into two groups: *Narodnaya Volya* (*The People's Will*) and *Chorny Peredel* (*The Black Redistribution*, *i.e.*, a redistribution of the land).—*Ed.*

tendency, if it seriously thinks of fighting, can dispense with such an organization. But the mistake the Narodnaya Volya-ites committed was not that they strove to recruit to their organization *all* the discontented, and to hurl this organization into the decisive battle against the autocracy; on the contrary, that was their great historical merit. Their mistake was that they relied on a theory which in substance was not a revolutionary theory at all, and they either did not know how, or circumstances did not permit them, to link up their movement inseparably with the class struggle that went on within developing capitalist society. And only a gross failure to understand Marxism (or an "understanding" of it in the spirit of Struve-ism) could prompt the opinion that the rise of a mass, spontaneous labour movement *relieves* us of the duty of creating as good an organization of revolutionaries as *Zemlya i Volya* had in its time, and even an incomparably better one. On the contrary, this movement *imposes* this duty upon us, because the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat will not become a genuine "class struggle" until it is led by a strong organization of revolutionaries.

Secondly, many, including apparently B. Krichevsky (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 18), misunderstand the polemics that Social-Democrats have always waged against the "conspirative" view of the political struggle. We have always protested, and will, of course, continue to protest against *confining* the political struggle to conspiracies.* But this does not, of course, mean that we deny the need for a strong revolutionary organization. And in the pamphlet mentioned in the preceding footnote, after the polemics against reducing the political struggle to a conspiracy, a description is given (as a Social-Democratic ideal) of an organization so strong as to be able to "resort to ... rebellion" and to every "other form of attack," in order to "deliver a smashing blow against absolutism."** According to its *form* a strong revolutionary organization of that kind in an autocratic country may also be described as a "conspirative" organization, because the French word "*conspiration*" is tantamount to the Russian word "*zagovor*" ("conspiracy"), and we must have the utmost secrecy for an organization of that kind. Secrecy is such a necessary condition for such an organization

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* *Cf. The Tasks of Russian Social-Democrats,* p. 21, Polemics against P. L. Lavrov. (See this volume pp. 138-42.—*Ed.*)

** *Ibid.*, p. 23. (See this volume p. 140.—*Ed.*) *Apropos,* we shall give another illustration of the fact that *Rabocheye Dyelo* either does not understand what it is talking about, or changes its views "with every change in the wind." In No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo,* we find the following passage in italics: *"The sum and substance of the views expressed in this pamphlet coincide entirely with the editorial program of 'Rabocheye Dyelo.'"* (P. 142.) Is that so, indeed? Does the view that the mass movement must not be set the primary task of overthrowing the autocracy coincide with the views expressed in the pamphlet, *The Tasks of Russian Social-Democrats?* Do "the economic struggle against the employers and the government" theory and the stages theory coincide with the views expressed in that pamphlet? We leave it to the reader to judge whether an organ which understands the meaning of "coincidence" in this peculiar manner can have firm principles.

that all the other conditions (number and selection of members, functions, etc.) must all be subordinated to it. It would be extremely naive indeed, therefore, to fear the accusation that we Social-Democrats desire to create a conspirative organization. Such an accusation would be as flattering to every opponent of Economism as the accusation of being followers of "Narodnaya Volya"-ism would be.

Against us it will be argued: such a powerful and strictly secret organization, which concentrates in its hands all the threads of secret activities, an organization which of necessity must be a centralized organization, may too easily throw itself into a premature attack, may thoughtlessly intensify the movement before political discontent, the ferment and anger of the working class, etc., are sufficiently ripe for it. To this we reply: speaking abstractly, it cannot be denied, of course, that a militant organization *may* thoughtlessly commence a battle, which *may* end in defeat, which might have been avoided under other circumstances. But we cannot confine ourselves to abstract reasoning on such a question, because every battle bears within itself the abstract possibility of defeat, and there is no other way of *reducing* this possibility than by organized preparation for battle. If, however, we base our argument on the concrete conditions prevailing in Russia at the present time, we must come to the positive conclusion that a strong revolutionary organization is absolutely necessary precisely for the purpose of giving firmness to the movement, and of *safeguarding* it against the possibility of its making premature attacks. It is precisely at the present time, when no such organization exists yet, and when the revolutionary movement is rapidly and spontaneously growing, that we *already observe* two opposite extremes (which, as is to be expected "meet"), *i.e.*, absolutely unsound Economism and the preaching of moderation, and equally unsound "excitative terror," which "strives artificially to call forth symptoms *of its end in a movement which is developing and becoming strong*, but which is as yet nearer to its beginning than to its end." (V. Zasulich, in *Zarya*, No. 2-3, p. 353.) And the example of *Rabocheye Dyelo* shows that *there are already* Social-Democrats who give way to both these extremes. This is not surprising because, apart from other reasons the "economic struggle against the employers and the government" *can never* satisfy revolutionaries, and because opposite extremes will always arise here and there. Only a centralized, militant organization that consistently carries out a Social-Democratic policy, that satisfies, so to speak, all revolutionary instincts and strivings, can safeguard the movement against making thoughtless attacks and prepare it for attacks that hold out the promise of success.

It will be further argued against us that the views on organization here expounded contradict the "principles of democracy." Now while the first-mentioned accusation was of purely Russian origin, this one is of *purely foreign* origin. And only an organization abroad (the "Union" of Russian Social-Democrats) would be capable of giving its editorial board instructions like the following:

> "*Principles of Organization.* In order to secure the successful development and unification of Social-Democracy, broad democratic principles of Party organization must be emphasized, developed and fought for; and this is particularly necessary in view of the anti-democratic tendencies that have become revealed in the ranks of our Party." (*Two Congresses*, p. 18.)

We shall see how *Rabocheye Dyelo* fights against *Iskra's* "anti-democratic tendencies" in the next chapter. Here we shall examine more closely the "principle" that the Economists advance. Everyone will probably agree that "broad democratic principles" presuppose the two following conditions: first, full publicity, and second, election to all offices. It would be absurd to speak about democracy without publicity, that is, a publicity that extends beyond the circle of the membership of the organization. We call the German Socialist Party a democratic organization because all it does is done publicly; even its party congresses are held in public. But no one would call an organization that is hidden from every one but its members by a veil of secrecy, a democratic organization. What is the use of advancing "*broad* democratic principles" when the fundamental condition for these principles *cannot be fulfilled* by a secret organization? "Broad principles" turns out to be a resonant but hollow phrase. More than that, this phrase proves that the urgent tasks in regard to organization are totally misunderstood. Everyone knows how great is the lack of secrecy among the "broad" masses of revolutionaries. We have heard the bitter complaints of B—v on this score, and his absolutely just demand for a "strict selection of members." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, p. 42.) And people who boast about their "sensitiveness to life" come forward in a situation like this, and *urge*, not strict secrecy and a strict (and therefore more restricted) selection of members but "*broad* democratic principles!" This is what we call being absolutely wide of the mark.

Nor is the situation with regard to the second attribute of democracy, namely, the principle of election, any better. In politically free countries, this condition is taken for granted. "Membership of the Party is open to those who accept the principles of the Party program, and render all the support they can to the Party"—says point I of the rules of the German Social-Democratic Party. And as the political arena is as open to the public view as is the stage in a theatre, this acceptance or non-acceptance, support or opposition, is known to all from the press and public meetings. Everyone knows that a certain political figure began in such and such a way, passed through such and such an evolution, behaved in a trying moment in such and such a way and possesses such and such qualities and, consequently, knowing all the facts of the case, *every* Party member can decide for himself whether or not to elect this person for a certain Party office. The general control (in the literal sense of the term) that the Party exercises over every act this person commits in the poitical field brings

into existence an automatically operating mechanism which brings about what in biology is called "survival of the fittest." "Natural selection" of full publicity, the principle of election and general control provide the guarantee that, in the last analysis, every political figure will be "in his proper place," will do the work for which he is best fitted by his strength and abilities, will feel the effects of his mistakes on himself, and prove before all the world his ability to recognize mistakes and to avoid them.

Try to put this picture in the frame of our autocracy! Is it conceivable in Russia for all those "*who accept the principles of the Party program* and render all the support they can to the Party" to control every action of the revolutionary working in secret? Is it possible for all the revolutionaries to elect one of their number to any particular office, when, in the very interests of the work, he *must* conceal his identity from nine out of ten of these "all"? Ponder a little over the real meaning of the high-sounding phrases that *Rabocheye Dyelo* gives utterance to, and you will realize that "broad democracy" in Party organization, amidst the gloom of autocracy and the domination of gendarme selection, is nothing more than a *useless and harmful toy*. It is a useless toy because, as a matter of fact, no revolutionary organization has ever practised *broad* democracy, nor could it, however much it desired to do so. It is a harmful toy because any attempt to practise the "broad democratic principles" will simply facilitate the work of the police in making big raids, it will perpetuate the prevailing primitiveness, divert the thoughts of the practical workers from the serious and imperative task of training themselves to become professional revolutionaries to that of drawing up detailed "paper" rules for election systems. Only abroad, where very often people who have no opportunity of doing real live work gather together, can the "game of democracy" be played here and there, especially in small groups.

In order to show how implausible *Rabocheye Dyelo's* favourite trick is of advancing the plausible "principle" of democracy in revolutionary affairs, we shall again call a witness. This witness, E. Serebryakov, the editor of the London magazine, *Nakanunye*, has a tender feeling for *Rabocheye Dyelo*, and is filled with hatred against Plekhanov and the Plekhanovites. In articles that it published on the split in the "Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats," *Nakanunye* definitely took the side of *Rabocheye Dyelo* and poured a stream of despicable abuse upon Plekhanov. But this only makes this witness all the more valuable for us on this question. In No. 7 of *Nakanunye* (July 1899), in an article entitled "The Manifesto of the Self-Emancipation of the Workers Group," E. Serebryakov argues that it was "indecent" to talk about such things as "self-deception, priority and so-called Areopagus in a serious revolutionary movement" and *inter alia* wrote:

> "Myshkin, Rogachev, Zhelyabov, Mikhailov, Perovskaya, Figner and others never regarded themselves as leaders, and no one ever elected

or appointed them as such, although as a matter of fact, they were leaders because, in the propaganda period, as well as in the period of the fight against the government, they took the brunt of the work upon themselves, they went into the most dangerous places and their activities were the most fruitful. Leadership came to them not because they wished it, but because the comrades surrounding them had confidence in their wisdom, their energy and loyalty. To be afraid of some kind of Areopagus [if it is not feared, why write about it?] that would arbitrarily govern the movement is far too naive. Who would obey it?"

We ask the reader, in what way does "Areopagus" differ from "anti-democratic tendencies"? And is it not evident that *Rabocheye Dyelo's* "plausible" organizational principle is equally naive and indecent; naive, because no one would obey "Areopagus," or people with "anti-democratic tendencies," if "the comrades surrounding them had" no "confidence in their wisdom, energy and loyalty"; indecent, because it is a demagogic sally calculated to play on the conceit of some, on the ignorance of the actual state of our movement on the part of others, and on the lack of training and ignorance of the history of the revolutionary movement of still others. The only serious organizational principle the active workers of our movement can accept is strict secrecy, strict selection of members and the training of professional revolutionaries. If we possessed these qualities, something even more than "democracy" would be guaranteed to us, namely, complete, comradely, mutual confidence among revolutionaries. And this is absolutely essential for us because in Russia it is useless thinking that democratic control can serve as a substitute for it. It would be a great mistake to believe that because it is impossible to establish real "democratic" control, the members of the revolutionary organization will remain altogether uncontrolled. They have not the time to think about the toy forms of democracy (democracy within a close and compact body of comrades in which complete, mutual confidence prevails), but they have a lively sense of their *responsibility*, because they know from experience that an organization of real revolutionaries will stop at nothing to rid itself of an undesirable member. Moreover, there is a fairly well-developed public opinion in Russian (and international) revolutionary circles which has a long history behind it, and which sternly and ruthlessly punishes every departure from the duties of comradeship (and does not "democracy," real and not toy democracy, form a part of the conception of comradeship?). Take all this into consideration and you will realize that all the talk and resolutions about "anti-democratic tendencies" has the fetid odour of the game of generals that is played abroad.

It must be observed also that the other source of this talk, *i.e.*, naiveté, is likewise fostered by the confusion of ideas concerning the meaning of

democracy. In Mr. and Mrs. Webb's book on trade unionism,* there is an interesting chapter entitled "Primitive Democracy." In this chapter, the authors relate how, in the first period of existence of their unions, the British workers thought that it was an indispensable sign of democracy for all the members to do all the work of managing the unions; not only were all questions decided by the votes of all the members, but all the official duties were fulfilled by all the members in turn. A long period of historical experience was required to teach these workers how absurd such a conception of democracy was and to make them understand the necessity for representative institutions on the one hand, and for full-time professional officials on the other. Only after a number of cases of financial bankruptcy of trade unions occurred did the workers realize that rates of subscriptions and benefits cannot be decided merely by a democratic vote, but must be based on the advice of insurance experts. Let us take also Kautsky's book on parliamentarism and legislation by the people. There you will find that the conclusions drawn by the Marxian theoretician coincide with the lessons learned from many years of experience by the workers who organized "spontaneously." Kautsky strongly protests against Rittinghausen's primitive conception of democracy; he ridicules those who in the name of democracy demand that "popular newspapers shall be directly edited by the people"; he shows the need for *professional* journalists, parliamentarians, etc., for the Social-Democratic leadership of the proletarian class struggle; he attacks the "Socialism of anarchists and *litterateurs*," who in their "striving after effect" proclaim the principle that laws should be passed directly by the whole people, completely failing to understand that in modern society this principle can have only a relative application.

Those who have carried on practical work in our movement know how widespread is the "primitive" conception of democracy among the masses of the students and workers. It is not surprising that this conception permeates rules of organization and literature. The Economists of the Bernstein persuasion included in their rules the following: "§ 10. All affairs affecting the interests of the whole of the union organization shall be decided by a majority vote of all its members." The Economists of the terrorist persuasion repeat after them: "The decisions of the committee must be circulated among all the circles and become effective only after this has been done." (*Svoboda*, No. 1, p. 67.) Observe that this proposal for a widely applied referendum is advanced *in addition* to the demand that *the whole of* the organization be organized on an elective basis! We would not, of course, on this account condemn practical workers who have had too few opportunities for studying the theory and practice of real democratic organization. But when *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which claims to play a leading role, confines itself, under such conditions, to resolutions about broad democratic principles, how else can it be described than as a mere "striving after effect"?

* The Industrial Democracy.—*Ed.*

F. Local and All-Russian Work

Although the objections raised against the plan for an organization outlined here on the grounds of its undemocratic and conspirative character are totally unsound, nevertheless, a question still remains which is frequently put and which deserves detailed examination. This is the question about the relations between local work and all-Russian work. Fears are expressed that the formation of a centralized organization would shift the centre of gravity from the former to the latter; that this would damage the movement, would weaken our contacts with the masses of the workers, and would weaken local agitation generally. To these fears we reply that our movement in the past few years has suffered precisely from the fact that the local workers have been too absorbed in local work. Hence it is absolutely necessary to shift the weight of the work somewhat from local work to national work. This would not weaken, but on the contrary, it would strengthen our ties and the continuity of our local agitation. Take the question of central and local journals. I would ask the reader not to forget that we cite the publication of journals only as *an example*, illustrating an immeasurably broader, more widespread and varied revolutionary activity.

In the first period of the mass movement (1896-98), an attempt is made by local Party workers to publish an all-Russian journal, *Rabochaya Gazeta.* In the next period (1898-1900), the movement makes enormous strides, but the attention of the leaders is wholly absorbed by local publications. If we count up all the local journals that were published, we shall find that on the average one paper per month was published.* Does this not illustrate our primitive ways? Does this not clearly show that our revolutionary organization lags behind the spontaneous growth of the movement? If *the same number* of issues had been published, not by scattered local groups, but by a single organization, we would not only have saved an enormous amount of effort, but we would have secured immeasurably greater stability and continuity in our work. This simple calculation is very frequently lost sight of by those practical workers who work *actively*, almost exclusively, on local publications (unfortunately this is the case even now in the overwhelming majority of cases), as well as by the publicists who display an astonishing quixotism on this question. The practical workers usually rest content with the argument that "it is difficult"** for local workers to engage in the organization of an all-Russian newspaper, and that local newspapers are better than no newspapers at all. The latter argument is of course, perfectly just, and we shall not yield to any practical

* See *Report to the Paris Congress*, p. 14. "From that time [1897] to the spring of 1900, thirty issues of various papers were published in various places. . . . On an average, over one number per month was published."

** This difficulty is more apparent than real. As a matter of fact, *there is not a single* local circle that lacks the opportunity of taking up some function or other in connection with all-Russian work. "Don't say: I can't: say: I won't."

worker in our recognition of the enormous importance and usefulness of local newspapers *in general*. But this is not the point. The point is, can we rid ourselves of the state of diffusion and primitiveness that is so strikingly expressed in the thirty numbers of local newspapers published throughout the whole of Russia in the course of two and a half years? Do not restrict yourselves to indisputable, but too general, statements about the usefulness of local newspapers generally; have the courage also frankly to admit the defects that have been revealed by the experience of two and a half years. This experience has shown that under the conditions in which we work, these local newspapers prove, in the majority of cases, to be unstable in their principles, lacking in political significance, extremely costly in regard to expenditure of revolutionary forces, and totally unsatisfactory from a technical point of view (I have in mind, of course, not the technique of printing them, but the frequency and regularity of publication). These defects are not accidental: they are the inevitable result of the diffusion which, on the one hand, explains the predominance of local newspapers in the period under review, and, on the other hand, is *fostered by* this predominance. A separate local organization *is* positively *unable* to maintain stability of principles in its newspaper and raise it to the level of a political organ; *it is unable* to collect and utilize sufficient material dealing with the whole of our political life. While in politically free countries it is often argued in defence of numerous local newspapers that the cost of printing by local workers is low and that the local population can be kept more fully and quickly informed, experience has shown that in Russia this argument speaks *against* local newspapers. In Russia, local newspapers prove to be excessively costly in regard to the expenditure of revolutionary forces, and appear *very rarely*, for the very simple reason that no matter how small its size, the publication of an *illegal newspaper* requires a large secret apparatus such as requires large factory production; for such an apparatus cannot be created in a small, handicraft workshop. Very frequently, the primitiveness of the secret apparatus (every practical worker knows of numerous cases like this) enables the police to take advantage of the publication and distribution of one or two numbers to make *mass* arrests, which make such a clean sweep that it is necessary afterwards to start all over again. A well-organized secret apparatus requires professionally well-trained revolutionaries and proper division of labour, but neither of these requirements can be met by separate local organizations, no matter how strong they may be at any given moment. Not only are the general interests of our movement as a whole (training of the workers in consistent Socialist and political principles) *better served by non-local newspapers*, but so also are even specifically local interests. This may seem paradoxical at first sight, but it has been proved up to the hilt by the two and a half years of experience to which we have already referred. Everyone will agree that if all the local forces that were engaged in the publication of these thirty issues of newspapers had worked on a single newspaper, they could

easily have published sixty if not a hundred numbers and, consequently, would have more fully expressed all the specifically local features of the movement. True, it is not an easy matter to attain such a high degree of organization, but we must realize the need for it. Every local circle must think about it, and *work actively* to achieve it, without waiting to be pushed on from outside; and we must stop being tempted by the easiness and closer proximity of a local newspaper which, as our revolutionary experience has shown, proves to a large extent to be illusory.

And it is a bad service indeed those publicists render to the practical work who, thinking they stand particularly close to the practical workers, fail to see this illusoriness, and make shift with the astonishingly cheap and astonishingly hollow argument: we must have local newspapers, we must have district newspapers, and we must have all-Russian newspapers. Generally speaking, of course, all these are necessary, but when you undertake to solve a concrete organizational problem surely you must take time and circumstances into consideration. Is it not quixotic on the part of *Svoboda* (No. 1, p. 68), in a special article "dealing with *the question of a newspaper*," to write: "It seems to us that every locality, where any number of workers are collected, should have its own labour newspaper: not a newspaper imported from somewhere or other, but its very own." If the publicist who wrote that refuses to think about the significance of his own words, then at least you, reader, think about it for him. How many scores, if not hundreds, of "localities where any number of workers are collected" are there in Russia, and would it not be simply perpetuating our primitive methods if indeed every local organization set to work to publish its own newspaper? How this diffusion would facilitate the task of the gendarmes of netting—without any considerable effort at that—the local Party workers at the very beginning of their activity and preventing them from developing into real revolutionaries! A reader of an all-Russian newspaper, continues the author, would not find descriptions of the malpractices of the factory owners and the "details of factory life in other towns outside his district at all interesting." But "an inhabitant of Orel would not find it dull reading about Orel affairs. In every issue he would learn of who had been 'called over the coals' and who had been 'exposed', and his spirits would begin to soar." (P. 69.) Yes, yes, the spirit of the Orel reader would begin to soar, but the flights of imagination of our publicist are also beginning to soar—too high. He should have asked himself: is such a defence of petty parochialism in place? We are second to none in our appreciation of the importance and necessity of factory exposures, but it must be borne in mind that we have reached a stage when St. Petersburg folk find it dull reading the St. Petersburg correspondence of the St. Petersburg *Rabochaya Mysl*. Local factory exposures have always been *and should always continue* to be made through the medium of leaflets, but we must raise the level of the *newspaper*, and not lower it to the level of a factory leaflet. We do not require "petty" exposures for our "newspaper."

We require exposures of the important, typical evils of factory life, exposures based on the most striking facts and capable of arousing the interest of *all* workers and all leaders of the movement, capable of really enriching their knowledge, widening their outlook, and of rousing new districts and new professional strata of the workers.

"Moreover, in a local newspaper, all the malpractices of the factory officials and other authorities may be denounced hot on the spot. In the case of a general newspaper, however, by the time the news reaches the paper the facts will have been forgotten in the localities in which they occurred. The reader, when he gets the paper, will say: 'God knows when that happened!' " (*Ibid.*) Exactly! God knows when it happened. As we know from the source I have already quoted, within a period of two and a half years, thirty issues of newspapers were published in six cities. This, on the average, is *one issue per city per half year*. And even if our frivolous publicist *trebled* his estimate of the productivity of local work (which would be wrong in the case of an average city, because it is impossible to increase productivity to any extent by our primitive methods), we would still get only one issue every two months, *i.e.*, nothing at all like "denouncing hot on the spot." It would be sufficient, however, to combine a dozen or so local organizations, and assign active functions to their delegates in organizing a general newspaper, to enable us to "denounce," *over the whole of Russia*, not petty, but really outstanding and typical evils once every fortnight. No one who has any knowledge at all of the state of affairs in our organizations can have the slightest doubt about that. It is quite absurd to talk about an illegal newspaper catching the enemy red-handed, that is, if we mean it seriously and not merely as a metaphor. That can only be done by an anonymous leaflet, because an incident like that can only be of interest for a matter of a day or two (take, for example, the usual brief strikes, beatings in a factory, demonstrations, etc.).

"The workers not only live in factories, they also live in the cities," continues our author, rising from the particular to the general, with a strict consistency that would have done honour to Boris Krichevsky himself; and he refers to matters like municipal councils, municipal hospitals, municipal schools, and demands that labour newspapers should not ignore municipal affairs in general. This demand is an excellent one in itself, but it serves as a remarkable illustration of the empty abstraction which too frequently characterizes discussions about local newspapers. First of all, if indeed newspapers appeared "in every locality where any number of workers are collected" with such detailed information on municipal affairs as *Svoboda* desires, it would, under our Russian conditions, inevitably degenerate into actual parochialism, would lead to a weakening of the consciousness of the importance of an all-Russian revolutionary attack upon the tsarist autocracy, and would strengthen those extremely virile shoots of the tendency —not uprooted but rather temporarily suppressed—which has already

become notorious as a result of the famous remark about revolutionaries who talk a great deal about non-existent parliaments and too little about existing municipal councils. We say "inevitably" deliberately, in order to emphasize that *Svoboda* obviously does not want this but the contrary to happen. But good intentions are not enough. In order that municipal affairs may be dealt with in their proper perspective, in relation to the whole of our work, this perspective must *first* be clearly conceived; it must be firmly established, not only by argument, but by numerous examples, in order that it may acquire the firmness of a *tradition*. This is far from being the case with us yet. And yet this must be done *first*, before we can even think and talk about an extensive local press.

Secondly, in order to be able to write well and interestingly about municipal affairs, one must know these questions not only from books. And there are hardly any Social-Democrats *anywhere in Russia* who possess this knowledge. In order to be able to write in newspapers (not in popular pamphlets) about municipal and state affairs, one must have fresh and multifarious material collected and worked up by able journalists. And in order to be able to collect and work up such material, we must have something more than the "primitive democracy" of a primitive circle, in which everybody does everything and all entertain one another by playing at referendums. For this it is necessary to have a staff of expert writers, expert correspondents, an army of Social-Democratic reporters that has established contacts far and wide, able to fathom all sorts of "state secrets" (about which the Russian government official is so puffed up, but which he so easily blabs), able to penetrate "behind the scenes," an army of people whose "official duty" it must be to be ubiquitous and omniscient. And we, the party that fights against *all* economic, political, social and national oppression, can and must find, collect, train, mobilize and set into motion such an army of omniscient people—but all this has yet to be done! Not only has not a single step been taken towards this in the overwhelming majority of localities, but in many cases the necessity for doing it is *not even realized*. Search our Social-Democratic press for lively and interesting articles, correspondence, and exposures of our diplomatic, military, ecclesiastical, municipal, financial, etc., etc., affairs and malpractices! You will find *almost nothing*, or very little, about these things.* That is why "it always

* That is why even examples of exceptionally good local newspapers fully confirm our point of view. For example, *Yuzhny Rabochy* (*Southern Worker*) is an excellent newspaper, and is altogether free from instability of principles. But it has been unable to provide what it desired for the local movement, owing to the infrequency of its publication and to extensive police raids. What our Party most urgently requires, at the present time, *viz.*, the presentation of the fundamental questions of the movement and wide political agitation, the local newspaper has been unable to satisfy. And the material it has published exceptionally well, like the articles about the mine owners' congress, unemployment, etc., was not strictly local material, *it was required for the whole of Russia*, and not for the South alone. No articles like that have appeared in any of our Social-Democratic newspapers.

frightfully annoys me when a man comes to me, utters beautiful and charming words" about the need for newspapers that will expose factory, municipal and government evils "in every locality where any number of workers are collected!"

The predominance of the local press over the central press may be either *a symptom of poverty or a symptom of luxury. Of poverty, when the movement* has not yet developed the forces for large-scale production, and continues to flounder in primitive ways and in "the petty details of factory life." Of luxury, when the movement has *already fully mastered* the task of all-sided exposure and all-sided agitation and it becomes necessary to publish numerous local newspapers in addition to the central organ. Let each one decide for himself what the predominance of local newspapers implies at the present time. I shall limit myself to a precise formulation of my own conclusion in order to avoid grounds for misunderstandings. Hitherto, the majority of our local organizations have been thinking almost exclusively of local newspapers, and have devoted almost all their activities to these. This is unsound—the very opposite should be the case. The majority of the local organizations should think principally of the publication of an all-Russian newspaper, and devote their activities principally to it. Until this is done, we shall *never* be able to establish *a single* newspaper capable, to any degree, of serving the movement with *all-sided* press agitation. When it is done, however, normal relations between the necessary *central newspapers and the necessary local newspapers will be established* automatically.

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It would seem at first sight that the conclusion drawn concerning the necessity for transferring the weight of effort from local work to all-Russian work does not apply to the sphere of the specifically economic struggle. In this struggle, the immediate enemy of the workers is the individual employer or group of employers, who are not bound by any organization having even the remotest resemblance to the purely militant, strictly centralized organization of the Russian government which is guided even in its minutest details by a single will, and which is our immediate enemy in the political struggle.

But that is not the case. As we have already pointed out many times, *the economic struggle is a trade struggle, and for that reason it* requires that the workers be organized according to trade and not only according to their place of employment. And this organization by trade becomes all the more imperatively necessary, the more rapidly our employers organize in all sorts of companies and syndicates. Our state of diffusion and our primitiveness hinder this work of organization, and in order that this work may be carried out we must have a single, all-Russian organization of revolutionaries capable of undertaking the leadership of the all-Russian trade unions. We have already described above the type of organization that

is desired for this purpose, and now we shall add just a few words about this in connection with the question of our press.

Hardly anyone will doubt the necessity for every Social-Democratic newspaper having a *special section* devoted to the trade union (economic) struggle. But the growth of the trade union movement compels us to think also about the trade union press. It seems to us, however, that with rare exceptions it is not much use thinking of trade union newspapers in Russia at the present time; that would be a luxury, and in many places we cannot even obtain our daily bread. The form of trade union press that would suit the conditions of our illegal work and is already called for at the present time is the *trade union pamphlet.* In these pamphlets, *legal** and illegal material should be collected and grouped systematically, on conditions of labour in a given trade, on the various conditions prevailing in the various parts of Russia, on the principal demands advanced by the workers in a given trade, on the defects of the laws in relation to that trade, on the outstanding cases of workers' economic struggle in this trade, on the rudiments, the present state and the requirements of their trade union organizations, etc. Such pamphlets would, in the first place, relieve our Social-Democratic press of a mass of trade details that interest only the workers employed in the given trade; secondly, they would record the results of our experience in the trade union struggle, would preserve the material collected—which is now literally lost in a mass of leaflets and fragmentary correspondence—and would generalize this material. Thirdly, they could serve as material for the guidance of agitators, because conditions of labour change relatively slowly and the principal demands of the workers in a given trade hardly ever change (see, for example, the demands advanced

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* Legal material is particularly important in this connection, but we have lagged behind very much in our ability systematically to collect and utilize it. It would not be an exaggeration to say that legal material alone would be sufficient for a trade union pamphlet, whereas illegal material alone would not be sufficient. In illegal material collected from workers on questions like those dealt with in the publications of *Rabochaya Mysl,* we waste a lot of the efforts of revolutionaries (whose place in this work could very easily be taken by legal workers), and yet we never obtain good material because a worker who knows only a single department of a large factory, who knows the economic results but not the general conditions and standards of his work, cannot acquire the knowledge which is possessed by the office staff of a factory, by inspectors, doctors, etc., and which is scattered in petty newspaper correspondence, and in special, industrial, medical, Zemstvo and other publications.

I very distinctly remember my "first experiment," which I would never like to repeat. I spent many weeks "examining" a workingman who came to visit me, about the conditions prevailing in the enormous factory at which he was employed. True, after great effort, I managed to obtain material for a description (of just one single factory!), but at the end of the interview the workingman wiped the sweat from his brow, and said to me smilingly: "I would rather work overtime than reply to your questions!"

The more energetically we carry on our revolutionary struggle, the more the government will be compelled to legalize a part of the "trade union" work, and by that relieve us of part of our burden.

by the weavers in the Moscow district in 1885 and in the St. Petersburg district in 1896); a compilation of these demands and needs might serve for years as an excellent handbook for agitators on economic questions in backward localities or among the backward strata of the workers. Examples of successful strikes, information about the higher standard of living, about better conditions of labour in one district, would encourage the workers in other districts to take up the fight again and again. Fourthly, having made a start in generalizing the trade union struggle, and having in this way strengthened the contacts between the Russian trade union movement and Socialism, the Social-Democrats would at the same time see to it that our trade union work did not take up either too small or too large a part of *our* general Social-Democratic work. A local organization that is cut off from the organizations in other towns finds it very difficult, and sometimes almost impossible, to maintain a correct sense of proportion (and the example of *Rabochaya Mysl* shows what a monstrous exaggeration is sometimes made in the direction of trade unionism). But an all-Russian organization of revolutionaries that stands undeviatingly on the basis of Marxism, that leads the whole of the political struggle and possesses a staff of professional agitators, will never find it difficult to determine the proper proportion.

V

THE "PLAN" FOR AN ALL-RUSSIAN POLITICAL NEWSPAPER

"The most serious blunder *Iskra* committed in this connection," writes B. Krichevsky (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 30)—accusing us of betraying a tendency to "convert theory into a lifeless doctrine by isolating it from practice"—"was in promoting its 'plan' for a general Party organization" (*i.e.*, the article entitled "Where To Begin?") and Martynov echoes this idea by declaring that "*Iskra's* tendency to belittle the forward march of the drab every-day struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas ... was crowned by the plan for the organization of a party that it advances in an article in No. 4, entitled 'Where To Begin?'" (*Ibid.*, p. 61.) Finally, L. Nadezhdin recently joined in the chorus of indignation against this "plan" (the quotation marks were meant to express sarcasm). In a pamphlet we have just received written by him, entitled *The Eve of the Revolution* (published by the Revolutionary Socialist group, *Svoboda*, whose acquaintance we have already made), he declares: "To speak now of an organization linked up with an all-Russian newspaper means propagating armchair ideas and armchair work" (p. 126), that it is a manifestation of "literariness," etc.

It does not surprise us that our terrorist agrees with the champions of the "forward march of the drab every-day struggle," because we have already

traced the roots of this intimacy between them in the chapters on politics and organization. But we must here draw attention to the fact that L. Nadezhdin is the only one who has conscientiously tried to understand the ideas expressed in an article he disliked, and has made an attempt to reply to the point, whereas *Rabocheye Dyelo* has said nothing that is material to the subject, but has only tried to confuse the question by a whole series of indecent, demagogic sallies. Unpleasant though the task may be, we must first spend some time in cleaning this Augean stable.*

B. Can a Newspaper Be a Collective Organizer?

The main points in the article "Where To Begin?" deal *precisely* with this question, and reply to it in the affirmative. As far as we know, the only attempt to examine this question and to prove that it must be answered in the negative was made by L. Nadezhdin, whose argument we reproduce in full:

> "...The manner in which the question of the need for an all-Russian newspaper is presented in *Iskra*, No. 4, pleases us very much, but we cannot agree that such a presentation fits in with the title of the article 'Where To Begin?' Undoubtedly this is an extremely important matter, but neither a newspaper, nor a whole series of popular leaflets, nor a whole mountain of manifestos, can serve as the basis for a militant organization in revolutionary times. We must set to work to build up strong political organizations in the localities. We lack such organizations; we have been carrying on our work mainly among intelligent workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle. *If we do not build up strong political organizations locally, what will be the use of even an excellently organized all-Russian newspaper*? It will be a burning bush, burning without being consumed, and inflaming nobody. *Iskra* thinks that as a matter of fact people will gather around it, and they will organize. *But they will find it more interesting to gather and organize around something more concrete*! This something more concrete may be the extensive publication of local newspapers, the immediate setting to work to rally the forces of labour for demonstrations, constant work by local organizations among the unemployed (regularly distribute pamphlets and leaflets among them, convene meetings for them, call upon them to resist the government, etc.). We must organize live

* Sub-section "A. Who Was Offended by the Article 'Where To Begin?'" is omitted in the present edition since it deals exclusively with the polemic with the *Rabocheye Dyelo* and the Bund anent the *Iskra's* attempt to "command," and so forth. This sub-section, incidentally, speaks of the fact that it was the Bund itself that (in 1898-99) invited the members of the *Iskra* to renew the Central Organ of the Party and to organize a "literary laboratory."

political work in the localities, and when the time comes to amalgamate on this real basis, it will not be an artificial, a paper amalgamation; it will not be by means of newspapers that such an amalgamation of local work into an all-Russian cause will be achieved!" (*The Eve of the Revolution*, p. 54.)

We have emphasized the passages in this eloquent tirade which most strikingly illustrate the author's incorrect judgment of our plan, and the *incorrectness of the point of view, generally, that he opposes to that of Iskra.* Unless we build up strong political organizations in the localities—even an excellently organized all-Russian newspaper will be of no avail. Absolutely true. But the whole point is that *there is no other way of training* strong political organizations except through the medium of an all-Russian newspaper. The author missed the most important statement *Iskra* made *before it proceeded* to explain its "plan": that it was necessary "to call for the establishment of a revolutionary organization, capable of combining all the forces and of leading the movement *not only in name* but in deed, *i.e., an organization that will be ready at any moment to support every protest and every outbreak,* and to utilize these for the purpose of increasing and strengthening the military forces required for decisive battle." After the February and March events, everyone will agree with this in principle, continues *Iskra*, but we do not need a solution of this problem in principle; *what we need is a practical solution of it*; we must immediately bring forward a definite plan of construction in order that everyone may set to work to build *from every side*. And now we are again being dragged away from a practical solution towards something that is correct in principle, indisputable and great, but absolutely inadequate and absolutely incomprehensible to the broad masses of workers, namely, to "build up strong political organizations!" This is not the point that is now being discussed, most worthy author! The point is, *how* to train and what training it should be!

It is not true to say that "*we have been carrying on our work mainly among intelligent workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle.*" Presented in such a form, this postulate goes wrong on the point which *Svoboda* always goes wrong on and which is radically wrong, and that is, it sets up the intelligent workers in contrast to the "masses." Even the intelligent workers have been "engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle" during the past few years. Moreover, the masses will never learn to conduct the political struggle until we help *to train* leaders for this struggle, both from among the intelligent workers and from among the intellectuals; and such leaders can be trained *solely* by systematic and every-day appreciation of *all* aspects of our political life, of *all attempts* at protest and struggle on the part of various classes and on various grounds. Therefore, to talk about "building up political organizations" *and at the same time to contrast* a "paper organization" of a political newspaper to "live political work in the localities"

is simply ridiculous! Why, *Iskra* has adapted its "plan" for a newspaper to the "plan" for creating a "militant preparedness" to support the unemployed movement, peasant revolts, discontent among the Zemstvo-ists, "popular indignation against the reckless tsarist bashi-bazouks," etc. Everyone who is at all acquainted with the movement knows perfectly well that the majority of local organizations *never even dream* of these things, that many of the prospects of "live political work" here indicated *have never been* realized by a single organization, that the attempt to call attention to the growth of discontent and protest among the Zemstvo intelligentsia rouses feelings of consternation and amazement in Nadezhdin ("Good Lord, is this newspaper intended for Zemstvo-ists?"—*Kanun*, p. 129), among the Economists (letter to *Iskra*, No. 12) and among many of the practical workers. Under these circumstances, it is possible to "begin" *only* by stirring up people to *think* about all these things, by stirring them up to summarize and generalize all the signs of ferment and active struggle. "Live political work" can be begun in our time, when Social-Democratic tasks are being degraded, *exclusively* by means of live political agitation, which is impossible unless we have a frequently issued and properly distributed all-Russian newspaper.

Those who regard *Iskra's* "plan" as a manifestation of "literariness" have totally failed to understand the substance of the plan, and imagine that what is suggested as the most suitable means for the present time is the ultimate goal. These people have not taken the trouble to study the two comparisons that were drawn to illustrate the plan proposed. *Iskra* wrote: the publication of an all-Russian political newspaper must be *the main line* that must guide us in our work of unswervingly developing, deepening and expanding this organization (*i.e.*, a revolutionary organization always prepared to support every protest and every outbreak). Pray tell me: when bricklayers lay bricks in various parts of an enormous structure the like of which has never been seen before, is it "paper" work to use a line to help them find the correct place in which to put each brick, to indicate to them the ultimate purpose of the work as a whole, to enable them to use not only every brick but even every piece of brick which, joining with the bricks placed before and after it, forms a complete and all-embracing line? and are we not now passing through a period in our Party life when we have bricks and bricklayers, but lack the guiding line which all could see and follow? Let them shout that in stretching out the line, we desire to command. Had we desired to command, gentlemen, we would have written on the title page, not "*Iskra*, No. 1" but "*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 3," as we were invited to do by a number of comrades, and *as we had a perfect right to do*. But we did not do that. We wished to have our hands free to conduct an irreconcilable struggle against all pseudo-Social-Democrats, we wanted our line, if properly laid, to be respected because it was correct, and not because it was carried out by an official organ.

> "The question of combining local activity in central organs runs in a vicious circle," L. Nadezhdin tells us pedantically, "for this requires homogeneous elements, and this homogeneity can be created only by something that combines; but this combining element may be the product of strong local organizations which at the present time are not distinguished for their homogeneity."

This truism is as hoary and indisputable as the one that says we must build up strong political organizations. And it is equally barren. *Every* question "runs in a vicious circle" because the whole of political life is an endless chain consisting of an infinite number of links. The whole art of politics lies in finding the link that is least likely to be torn out of our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that guarantees the command of the whole chain, and having found it, in clinging to that link as tightly as possible. If we possessed a staff of experienced bricklayers, who had learned to work so well together that they could dispense with a guiding line and could place their bricks exactly where they were required without one (and, speaking abstractly, this is by no means impossible), then perhaps we might seize upon some other link. But the unfortunate thing is that we have no experienced bricklayers trained to teamwork yet, that bricks are often laid where they are not needed at all, that they are not laid according to the general line, and are so scattered about that the enemy can shatter the structure as if it were made not of bricks but of sand.

Here is the other comparison:

> "A paper is not merely a collective propagandist and collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer. In this respect it *can be compared to the scaffolding* erected around a building in construction; it marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organized labour."*

Does this sound anything like the attempt of an armchair author to exaggerate his role? The scaffolding put up around a building is not required at all for habitation, it is made of the cheapest material, it is only put up temporarily, and as soon as the shell of the structure is completed, is scrapped for firewood. As for the building up of revolutionary organizations, experience shows that sometimes they may be built without scaffolding—take the 'seventies for example. But at the present time we cannot imagine that the building we require can be put up without scaffolding.

Nadezhdin disagrees with this, and says: "*Iskra* thinks that as a matter

* Martynov, quoting the first sentence in this passage in *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10, p. 62), left out the second sentence, as if desiring to emphasize by that either his unwillingness to discuss the essentials of the question, or his incapability of understanding it.

of fact people will gather around it, and they will organize. *But they will find it more interesting* to gather and organize around something *more concrete!*" So! So! "They will find it more interesting to gather around something more concrete...." There is a Russian proverb which says: "Don't spit into the well, you may want to drink out of it." But there are people who do not object to drinking from a well which has been spat into. What despicable things our magnificent legal "critics of Marxism" and illegal admirers of *Rabochaya Mysl* have said in the name of this—something more concrete! See how restricted our movement is by our own narrowness, lack of initiative and hesitation, and yet this is justified by the traditional argument about finding it "more interesting to gather around something more concrete!" And Nadezhdin—who regards himself as being particularly sensitive to "life," who so severely condemns "armchair" authors, who (with pretensions to being witty) charges *Iskra* with a weakness for seeing Economism everywhere, and who imagines that he stands far above this discrimination between the "orthodox" and the "critics"—fails to see that with this sort of argument he is playing into the hands of the very narrowness against which he is so indignant and that he is drinking from a well that has actually been spat into! The sincerest indignation against narrowness, the most passionate desire to raise those who worship this narrowness from their knees, is insufficient if the indignant one is swept along without sail or rudder as "spontaneously" as the revolutionaries of the 'seventies, and clutches at such things as "excitative terror," "agrarian terror," "sounding the tocsin," etc. Glance at this something "more concrete" around which he thinks it will be "more interesting" to gather and organize: 1) local newspapers; 2) preparations for demonstrations; 3) work among the unemployed. It will be seen at the very first glance that all these have been seized upon at random in order to be able to say something, for however we may regard them, it would be absurd to see in them anything especially adapted for the purpose of "gathering and organizing." This very Nadezhdin a few pages further on says: "It is time we simply stated the fact that extremely petty work is being carried on in the localities, the committees are not doing a tenth of what they could do ... the combining centres that we have at the present time are a pure fiction, they represent a sort of revolutionary bureaucracy, the members of which mutually appoint each other to the post of generals; and so it will continue until strong local organizations grow up." These remarks, while exaggerating the position somewhat, express many a bitter truth, but cannot Nadezhdin see the connection between the petty work carried on in the localities and the narrow outlook of the Party workers, the narrow scope of their activities, which is inevitable in view of the lack of training of the Party workers isolated in their local organizations? Has he, like the author of the article on organization published in *Svoboda*, forgotten how the adoption of a broad local press (in 1898) was accompanied by a very strong intensification of Economism and "primitive methods"? Even if a broad local press could

be established at all satisfactorily (and we have shown above that it is impossible save in very exceptional cases)—even then the local organs could not "gather and organize" *all* the revolutionary forces for a *general* attack upon the autocracy and for the leadership of a *united* struggle. Do not forget that we are here discussing *only* the "gathering," the organizing significance of a newspaper, and we could put to Nadezhdin, who defends diffuseness, the very question that he himself has already put ironically: "Has *someone left us a legacy of 200,000 revolutionary organizers?*" Furthermore, "preparations for demonstrations" cannot be *opposed* to *Iskra's* plan for the very reason that this plan includes the organization of the widest possible demonstrations *as one of its aims*; the point under discussion is the selection of the practical *means*. On this point also Nadezhdin has become confused and has lost sight of the fact that only already "gathered and organized" forces can "prepare for" demonstrations (which hitherto, *in the overwhelming majority of cases, have taken place quite spontaneously*) and we *lack precisely the ability* to gather and organize. "Work among the unemployed." Again the same confusion, for this too represents one of the military operations of mobilized forces and not a plan to mobilize the forces. The extent to which Nadezhdin underestimates the harm caused by our diffuseness, by our lack of "200,000 organizers," can be seen from the following: many (including Nadezhdin) have reproached *Iskra* with the paucity of the news it gives about unemployment and with the casual nature of the correspondence it publishes about the most common affairs of rural life. The reproach is justified, but *Iskra* is "guilty without sin." We strive *to "stretch a line" even through the countryside, but there are almost no* bricklayers there, and we are *obliged* to encourage *everyone* to send us information concerning even the most common facts, in the hope that this will increase the number of our contributors in this field and will ultimately *train us all* to select the really most outstanding facts. But the material on which we can train is so scanty that unless we generalize it for the whole of Russia we shall have very little to train on at all. No doubt one who possesses at least as much capability as an agitator, and as much knowledge of the life of the vagrant as apparently Nadezhdin does, could render priceless service to the movement by carrying on agitation among the *unemployed*—*but such a one would be simply burying his talents if he* failed to inform *all* Russian comrades of every step he took in his work, in order that others, who, in the mass, as yet lack the ability to undertake *new kinds of work, might learn from his example.*

Absolutely everybody now talks about the importance of unity, about the necessity for "gathering and organizing," but in the majority of cases *what is lacking is a definite idea of where to begin and how to bring* about this unification. Probably everyone will agree that if we "unite," say, the district circles in a given city, it will be necessary to have for this purpose *common institutions, i.e.*, not merely *a common title of "Union" but* genuinely *common* work, exchange of material, experience and forces, distribu-

tion of functions, not only in the given districts but in a whole city, according to special tasks. Everyone will agree that a big secret apparatus will not pay its way (if one may employ a commercial expression) "with the resources" (in material and man power, of course) of a single district, and that a single district will not provide sufficient scope for a specialist to develop his talents. But the same thing applies to the unification of a number of cities, because even such a field, like a single locality, *will prove*, and has already proved in the history of our Social-Democratic movement, to be too restricted: we have already proved this above, in connection with political agitation and organizational work. We must first and foremost widen the field, establish *real* contacts between the cities on the basis of *regular, common* work; for diffuseness restricts the activities of our people who are "stuck in a hole" (to use the expression employed by a correspondent to *Iskra*), not knowing what is happening in the world; they have no one to learn from, do not know how to acquire experience or satisfy their desire to engage in broad activities. And I continue to insist that we can *start* establishing *real* contacts only with the aid of a common newspaper, as a single, regular, all-Russian enterprise, which will summarize the results of all the diverse forms of activity and thereby *stimulate* our people to march forward untiringly along *all* the innumerable paths which lead to revolution in the same way as all roads lead to Rome. If we do not want unity in name only, we must arrange for every local circle *immediately to assign*, say a fourth of its forces to *active* work for the *common* cause, and the newspaper will immediately convey to them the general design, dimensions and character of this cause, will indicate to them precisely the most serious defects of all-Russian activity, where agitation is lacking and where contacts are weak, and point out which small wheels in the great general mechanism could be repaired or replaced by better ones. A circle that has not yet commenced to work, which is only just seeking work, could then start, not like a craftsman in a small separate workshop unaware of the development that has taken place in "industry" before him, or of the methods of production prevailing in industry, but as a participant in an extensive enterprise that *reflects* the whole general revolutionary attack upon the autocracy. And the more perfect the finish of each little wheel, the larger the number of detail workers working for the common cause, the closer will our network become and the less consternation will inevitable police raids call forth in the general ranks.

The mere function of distributing a newspaper will help to establish *real* contacts (that is, if it is a newspaper worthy of the name, *i.e.*, if it is issued regularly, not once a month like a magazine, but four times a month). At the present time, communication between cities on revolutionary business is an extreme rarity, and at all events the exception rather than the rule. If we had a newspaper, however, such communication would become the rule and would secure, not only the distribution of the newspaper, of course, but also (and what is more important) an interchange of experience, of

material, of forces and of resources. The scope of organizational work would immediately become ever so much wider and the success of a single locality would serve as a standing encouragement to further perfection and a desire to utilize the experience gained by comrades working in other parts of the country. Local work would become far richer and more varied than it is now: political and economic exposures gathered from all over Russia would provide mental food for the workers of all trades and in *all stages of development,* would provide material and occasion for talks and readings on the most diverse subjects, which indeed will be suggested by hints in the legal press, by conversations in society and by "shamefaced" government communications. Every outbreak, every demonstration, would be weighed and discussed in all its aspects all over Russia; it would stimulate a desire to catch up with the rest, a desire to excel (we Socialists do not by any means reject all rivalry or all "competition"!) and consciously to prepare for that which at first appeared to spring up spontaneously, a desire to take advantage of the favourable conditions in a given district or at a given moment for modifying the plan of attack, etc. At the same time, this revival of local work would render superfluous that desperate, "convulsive" exertion of all efforts and the risking of *all* men which every single demonstration or the publication of every single number of a local newspaper now entails. In the first place the police would find it much more difficult to dig down to the "roots" because they would not know in what district to seek for them. Secondly, regular common work would train our people to regulate the force of a *given* attack in accordance with the strength of the forces of the given local detachment of the army (at the present time no one ever thinks of doing that, because in nine cases out of ten these attacks occur spontaneously), and would facilitate the "transport" from one place to another, not only of literature, but also of revolutionary forces.

In a great many cases, these forces at the present time shed their blood in the cause of restricted local work, but under the circumstances we are discussing, occasion would constantly arise for transferring a capable agitator or organizer from one end of the country to another. Beginning with short journeys on Party business at the Party's expense, our people would become accustomed to being maintained by the Party, would become professional revolutionaries and would train themselves to become real political leaders.

And if indeed we succeeded in reaching a point when all, or at least a considerable majority, of the local committees, local groups and circles actively took up work for the common cause we could, in the not distant future, establish a daily newspaper that would be regularly distributed in tens of thousands of copies over the whole of Russia. This newspaper would become a part of an enormous pair of smith's bellows that would blow every spark of class struggle and popular indignation into a general conflagration. Around what is in itself a very innocent and very small, but a

regular and *common* cause, in the full sense of the word, an army of tried warriors would systematically gather and receive their training. On the ladders and scaffolding of this general organizational structure there would soon ascend Social-Democratic Zhelyabovs from among our revolutionaries and Russian Bebels from among our workers who would take their place at the head of the mobilized army and rouse the whole people to settle accounts with the shame and the curse of Russia.

That is what we should dream of.

* * *

"We should dream!" I wrote these words and became alarmed. I imagined myself sitting at a "unity congress" and opposite me were the editors and contributors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Comrade Martynov rises and, turning to me, says threateningly: "Permit me to ask you, has an autonomous editorial board the right to dream without first obtaining permission of the Party committee?" He is followed by Comrade Krichevsky who (philosophically deepening Comrade Martynov who had long ago deepened Comrade Plekhanov) continues in the same strain even more threateningly: "I go further. I ask, has a Marxist any right at all to dream, knowing that according to Marx mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve and that tactics is a process of growth of Party tasks, which grow with the Party?"

The very thought of these menacing questions sends a cold shiver down my back and makes me wish for nothing but a place to hide myself. I shall try to hide myself behind the back of Pisarev.*

> "There are differences and differences," wrote Pisarev concerning the question of the difference between dreams and reality. "My dream may run ahead of the natural progress of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural progress of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and strengthen the efforts of toiling humanity. . . . There is nothing in such dreams that would distort or paralyse labour power. On the contrary, if man were completely deprived of the ability to dream in this way, if he could never run ahead and mentally conceive, in an entire and completed picture, the results of the work he is only just commencing, then I cannot imagine what stimulus there would be to induce man to undertake and complete extensive and fatiguing work in the sphere of art, science and practical work. . . . Divergence between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with the airy castles he builds and if, generally speaking,

* Famous literary critic of the sixties of the last century who greatly influenced the Russian radical intelligentsia.—*Ed.*

he works conscientiously for the achievement of his phantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well."

Now of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And those most responsible for this are the people who boast of their sober views, their "closeness" to the "concrete," *i.e.,* the representatives of legal criticism and of illegal *khvostism.*

C. What Type of Organization Do We Require?

From what has been said the reader will understand that our "tactics-as-a-plan" consists of rejecting an immediate *call* for attack, in demanding "a regular siege of the enemy fortress," or in other words, in demanding that all efforts be directed towards gathering, organizing and *mobilizing* permanent troops. When we ridiculed *Rabocheye Dyelo* for its leap from Economism to shouting for an attack (for which it clamoured in *April* 1901, in *Listok Rabochevo Dyela,* No. 6), it of course hurled accusations against us of being "doctrinaire," of failing to understand our revolutionary duty, of calling for caution, etc. Of course we were not in the least surprised to hear these accusations coming from those who totally lack principles and who evade all arguments by references to a profound "tactics-as-a-process," any more than we were surprised by the fact that these accusations were repeated by Nadezhdin who in general has a supreme contempt for durable programs and the fundamentals of tactics.

It is said that history never repeats itself. But Nadezhdin is exerting every effort to cause it to repeat itself and he zealously imitates Tkachev in strongly condemning "revolutionary culturism," in shouting about "sounding the tocsin," about a special "eve of the revolution point of view," etc. Apparently, he has forgotten the well-known epigram which says: if an original historical event represents a tragedy, the copy of it is only a farce. The attempt to seize power, after the ground for the attempt had been prepared by the preaching of Tkachev and carried out by means of the "terrifying" terror which did really terrify, was majestic, but the "excitative" terror of a little Tkachev is simply ridiculous and is particularly ridiculous when it is supplemented by the idea of an organization of average workers.

> "If *Iskra* would only emerge from its sphere of literariness," wrote Nadezhdin, "it would realize that these [the workingman's letter to *Iskra,* No. 7, etc.] are symptoms of the fact that soon, very soon the 'attack' will commence, and to speak now [*sic!*] of an organization *linked up with an all-Russian newspaper means propagating armchair* ideas and armchair work."

What unimaginable confusion this is: on the one hand excitative terror and an "organization of average workers" accompanied by the opinion that it is "more interesting" to gather around something "more concrete" like

a local newspaper—and on the other hand, to talk "now" about an all-Russian organization means giving utterance to armchair thoughts, or, to speak more frankly and simply, "now" is already too late! But what about the "extensive organization of local newspapers"—is it not too late for that, my dear L. Nadezhdin? And compare this with *Iskra*'s point of view and tactics: excitative terror—is nonsense; to talk about an organization of average workers and about the *extensive* organization of local newspapers means opening the door wide for Economism. We must speak about a single all-Russian organization of revolutionaries, and it will never be too late to talk about that until the real, and not the paper, attack commences.

> "Yes, as far as our situation in regard to organization is concerned, it is far from brilliant," continues Nadezhdin. "Yes, *Iskra* is absolutely right when it says that the mass of our military forces consists of volunteers and insurgents.... You do very well in thus soberly presenting the state of our forces. But why in doing so do you forget that *the crowd is not ours*, and, consequently, *it will not ask us* when to commence military operations, it will simply go and 'rebel.'... When the crowd itself breaks out with its elemental destructive force it *may* overwhelm and crush the 'regular troops' among whom we had been preparing all the time to introduce extremely systematic organization, but had never *managed* to do so." (Our italics.)

Astonishing logic! *Precisely because* the "crowd is not ours," it is stupid and reprehensible to call for an "attack" this very minute, because an attack must be made by regular troops and not by a spontaneous outburst of the crowd. It is precisely because the crowd *may* overwhelm and crush the regular troops that we must without fail "manage to keep up" with the spontaneous rise of the masses in our work of "introducing extremely systematic organization" among the regular troops, for the more we "manage" to introduce organization the more probable will it be that the regular troops will not be overwhelmed by the crowd, but will take their place at the head of the crowd. Nadezhdin is confused because he imagines that these systematically organized troops are engaged in something that isolates them from the crowd, when as a matter of fact they are engaged exclusively in all-sided and all-embracing political agitation, *i.e.*, precisely in work that *brings them into closer proximity to, and merges* the elemental destructive force of the crowd with, the conscious destructive force of the organization of revolutionaries. You, gentlemen, merely wish to throw the blame for your sins on the shoulders of others. For it is precisely the *Svoboda* group that includes terror in its *program* and by that calls for an organization of terrorists, and such an organization would really prevent our troops from coming into proximity to the crowd which, unfortunately, is still not ours, and which, unfortunately, does not yet ask us, or rarely asks us when and how to commence military operations.

"We will miss the revolution itself," continues Nadezhdin in his effort

to scare *Iskra,* "in the same way as we missed recent events which came at us like a bolt from the blue." This sentence together with the one quoted above clearly demonstrates the absurdity of the "eve of the revolution point of view" invented by *Svoboda.** To speak frankly, this special "point of view" amounts to this: it is too late "now" to discuss and prepare. If that is the case, oh most worthy opponent of "literariness," what was the use of writing a pamphlet of 132 pages on "questions of theory** and tactics"? Don't you think it would have been more becoming for the "eve of the revolution point of view" to have issued 132,000 leaflets containing the brief call: "Kill them!"?

Those who place national political agitation at the cornerstone of their program, *their tactics and their organizational work* as *Iskra* does, stand the least risk of missing the revolution. The people who were engaged over the whole of Russia in weaving a network of organizations to be linked up with an all-Russian newspaper not only did not miss the spring events but, on the contrary, they enabled us to foretell them. Nor did they miss the demonstrations that were described in *Iskra,* Nos. 13 and 14; on the contrary, they took part in those demonstrations, clearly appreciating their duty to come to the aid of the spontaneously rising crowd and, at the same time, through the medium of the newspaper, they helped all the comrades in Russia to become more closely acquainted with these demonstrations and to utilize their experience. And if they live they will not miss the revolution which first and foremost will demand of us experience in agitation, ability to support (in a Social-Democratic manner) every protest, ability to direct the spontaneous movement, and to safeguard it from the mistakes of friends and the traps of enemies!

This brings us to the final argument that compels us to insist particularly upon a plan of organization that shall be centred around an all-Russian newspaper, to be brought about by means of joint work for a common newspaper. Only such a state of organization will secure for the Social-Democratic militant organization the necessary *flexibility, i.e.,* the ability

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* *The Eve of the Revolution,* p. 62.

** In his *Review of Questions of Theory,* L. Nadezhdin made almost no contribution whatever to the discussion of questions of theory apart perhaps from the following passage which appears to be a very peculiar one from the "eve of the revolution point of view": "Bernsteinism, on the whole, is losing its acuteness for us at the present moment, as also is the question as to whether Mr. Adamovich [V. V. Vorovsky.—*Ed.*] has proved that Mr. Struve has already deserved distinction, or on the contrary whether Mr. Struve will refute Mr. Adamovich and will refuse to resign—it really makes no difference, because the hour of the revolution has struck." (P. 110.) One can hardly imagine a more striking illustration of L. Nadezhdin's infinite disregard for theory. We have proclaimed "the eve of the revolution," *therefore,* "it really makes no difference" whether the orthodox Marxists will succeed in driving the critics from their positions or not!! And our wiseacre fails to see that it is precisely in the time of revolution that we stand in need of the results of our theoretical combats with the critics in order to be able resolutely to combat their *practical* positions!

to adapt itself immediately to the most diverse and rapidly changing conditions of struggle, the ability, "on the one hand, to avoid open battle against the overwhelming and concentrated forces of the enemy, and, on the other, to take advantage of the clumsiness of the enemy and attack him at a time and place he least expects attack."* It would be a grievous error indeed to build up the Party organization in the expectation only of outbreaks and street fighting or only upon the "forward march of the drab every-day struggle." We must *always* carry on our every-day work and always be prepared for everything, because very frequently it is almost impossible to foresee when periods of outbreaks will give way to periods of calm. And even in those cases when it is possible to do so, it will not be possible to utilize this foresight for the purpose of reconstructing our organization, because in an autocratic country these changes take place with astonishing rapidity and are sometimes due merely to a single night raid by the tsarist janizaries. And the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act (as Nadezhdin apparently imagines) but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with more or less intense calm. For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our Party organization, the focus of this activity, should be to carry on work that is possible and necessary in the period of the most powerful outbreaks as well as in the period of complete calm, that is to say, work of political agitation linked up over the whole of Russia, that will enlighten all aspects of life and will be carried on among the broadest possible strata of the masses. But this work *cannot possibly be carried on* in contemporary Russia without an all-Russian newspaper, issued very frequently. An organization that springs up spontaneously around this newspaper, an organization of *collaborators* of this paper (collaborators in the broad sense of the word, *i.e.*, all those working for it) will be ready *for everything*, from protecting the honour, the prestige and continuity of the Party in periods of acute revolutionary "depression," to preparing for, fixing the time for and carrying out the *national armed insurrection.*

Indeed, picture to yourselves a very ordinary occurrence with us—the complete discovery and arrest of our organization in one or several localities. In view of the fact that *all* the local organizations lack a *single*, com-

* *Iskra*, No. 4, "Where To Begin?" "Revolutionary culturists, who do not accept the eve of the revolution point of view, are not in the least perturbed by the prospect of working for a long period of time," writes Nadezhdin. (P. 62.) To this we shall remark: unless we are able to devise political tactics and an organizational plan based precisely upon calculations for *work over a long period of time* and at the same time, *in the very process of this work*, ensure our Party's readiness to be at its post and fulfil its duty at the very first, even unexpected, call, as soon as the progress of events becomes accelerated, we shall prove to be but miserable political adventurers. Only Nadezhdin, who began to describe himself as a Social-Democrat only yesterday, can forget that the aim of Social-Democracy is radically to transform the conditions of life of the whole of humanity and that for that reason it is not permissible for Social-Democrats to be "perturbed" by the question of the duration of the work.

mon regular task, such raids frequently result in the interruption of our work for many months. If, however, all the local organizations had one common task, then, in the event of a serious raid, two or three energetic persons could in the course of a few weeks establish new youth circles, which, as is well known, spring up very quickly even now, and link them up with the centre, and when this common task, which has been interrupted by the raid, is apparent to all, the new circles could spring up and link themselves up with it even more rapidly.

On the other hand, picture to yourselves a popular uprising. Probably everyone will now agree that we must think of this and prepare for it. But *how* to prepare for it? Surely the Central Committee cannot appoint agents to go to all the districts for the purpose of preparing for the uprising! Even if we had a Central Committee it could achieve nothing by making such appointments, considering the conditions prevailing in contemporary Russia. But a network of agents that would automatically be created in the course of establishing and distributing a common newspaper would not have to "sit around and wait" for the call to rebellion, but would carry on the regular work that would guarantee the highest probability of success in the event of a rebellion. Such work would strengthen our contacts with the broadest strata of the masses of the workers and with all those strata who are discontented with the autocracy, which is so important in the event of an uprising. It is precisely such work that would help to cultivate the ability properly to estimate the general political situation and, consequently, the ability to select the proper moment for the uprising. It is precisely such work that would train *all* local organizations to respond simultaneously to the same political questions, incidents and events that excite the whole of Russia, to react to these "events" in the most vigorous, uniform and expedient manner possible; for is not rebellion in essence the most vigorous, most uniform and most expedient "reaction" of the whole of the people to the conduct of the government? And finally, such work would train all revolutionary organizations all over Russia to maintain the most continuous, and at the same time the most secret, contact with each other, which would create *real Party* unity—for without such contacts it will be impossible collectively to discuss the plan of rebellion and to take the necessary preparatory measures on the eve of it, which must be kept in the strictest secrecy.

In a word, the "plan for an all-Russian political newspaper" does not represent the fruits of the work of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and literariness (as it seemed to those who failed to study it properly), on the contrary, it is a practical plan to begin immediately to prepare on all sides for the uprising, while at the same time never for a moment forgetting our ordinary, every-day work.

CONCLUSION

The history of Russian Social-Democracy can be divided into three distinct periods:

The first period covers about ten years, approximately the years 1884 to 1894. This was the period of the rise and consolidation of the theory and program of Social-Democracy. The number of adherents of the new tendency in Russia could be counted in units. Social-Democracy existed without a labour movement; it was, as it were, in its period of gestation.

The second period covers three or four years—1894-98. In this period Social-Democracy appeared in the world as a social movement, as the rising of the masses of the people, as a political party. This is the period of its childhood and adolescence. The fight against Narodism and going among the workers infected the intelligentsia wholesale like an epidemic, and the workers were equally infected by strikes. The movement made enormous strides. The majority of the leaders were very young people who had by no means reached the "age of thirty-five" which to N. Mikhailovsky appears to be a sort of natural borderline. Owing to their youth, they proved to be untrained for practical work and they left the scene with astonishing rapidity. But in the majority of cases the scope of their work was extremely wide. Many of them began their revolutionary thinking as Narodnaya Volyaites. Nearly all of them in their early youth enthusiastically worshipped the terrorist heroes. It was a great wrench to abandon the captivating impressions of these heroic traditions and it was accompanied by the breaking-off of personal relationships with people who were determined to remain loyal to Narodnaya Volya and for whom the young Social-Democrats had profound respect. The struggle compelled them to educate themselves, to read the illegal literature of all tendencies and to study closely the questions of legal Narodism. Trained in this struggle, Social-Democrats went into the labour movement without "for a moment" forgetting the theories of Marxism which illumined their path or the task of overthrowing the autocracy. The formation of the Party in the spring of 1898* was the most striking and at the same time the *last* act of the Social-Democrats in this period.

* The First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was held in March of that year.—*Ed.*

The third period, as we have seen, began in 1897 and definitely replaced the second period in 1898 (1898—?). This was the period of dispersion, dissolution and vacillation. In the period of adolescence the youth's voice breaks. And so, in this period, the voice of Russian Social-Democracy began to break, began to strike a false note—on the one hand, in the productions of Messrs. Struve and Prokopovich, Bulgakov and Berdyaev, on the other hand, in the productions of V. I—n and R. M., B. Krichevsky and Martynov. But it was only the leaders who wandered about separately and went back; the movement itself continued to grow, and it advanced with enormous strides. The proletarian struggle spread to new strata of the workers over the whole of Russia and at the same time indirectly stimulated the revival of the democratic spirit among the students and among other strata of the population. The consciousness of the leaders, however, yielded to the breadth and power of the spontaneous upsurge; among Social-Democrats, a different streak predominated—a streak of Party workers who had been trained almost exclusively on "legal Marxian" literature, and the more the spontaneity of the masses called for consciousness, the more the inadequacy of this literature was felt. The leaders not only lagged behind in regard to theory ("freedom of criticism") and practice ("primitiveness"), but even tried to justify their backwardness by all sorts of high-flown arguments. Social-Democracy was degraded to the level of trade unionism in legal literature by the Brentano-ites and in illegal literature by the *khvostists*. The program of the *Credo* began to be put into operation, especially when the "primitiveness" of the Social-Democrats caused a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary tendencies.

And if the reader reproaches me for having dealt in excessive detail with a certain *Rabocheye Dyelo,* I shall say to him in reply: *Rabocheye Dyelo* acquired "historical" significance because it most strikingly reflected the "spirit" of this third period.* It was not the consistent R. M. but the weathercock Krichevskys *and Martynovs who could properly express the confusion* and vacillation, and the readiness to make concessions to "criticism," to "Economism" and to terrorism. It is not the lofty contempt for practical work displayed by the worshippers of the "absolute" that is characteristic of this period, but the combination of pettifogging practice and utter disregard for theory. It was not so much the downright rejection of "grand phrases" that the heroes of this period engaged in as in the vulgarization of these phrases: scientific Socialism ceased to be an integral revolutionary theory and became a hodgepodge idea "freely" diluted with the contents of every new German textbook that appeared; the slogan "class struggle" did

* I could also reply with the German proverb: *Den Sack schlägt man, den Esel meint man* (you beat the sack, but the blows are intended for the ass). It was not *Rabocheye Dyelo* alone that was carried away by the fashion of "criticism" but also *the masses* of practical workers *and theoreticians;* they became confused on the question of spontaneity and lapsed from the Social Democratic to the trade union conception of our political and organizational tasks.

not impel them forward to wider and more strenuous activity but served as a soothing syrup, because the "economic struggle is inseparably linked up with the political struggle"; the idea of a party did not serve as a call for the creation of a militant organization of revolutionaries, but was used to justify some sort of a "revolutionary bureaucracy" and infantile playing at "democratic" forms.

When this third period will come to an end and the fourth begin we do not know (at all events it is already heralded by many signs). We are passing from the sphere of history to the sphere of the present and partly to the sphere of the future. But we firmly believe that the fourth period will see the consolidation of militant Marxism, that Russian Social-Democracy will emerge from the crisis in the full strength of manhood, that the place of the rearguard of opportunists will be taken by a "new guard," a genuine vanguard of the most revolutionary class.

In the sense of calling for such a "new guard" and summing up, as it were, all that has been expounded above, my reply to the question: "What is to be done?" can be put briefly:

Liquidate the Third Period.

Originally published
as a separate pamphlet
in 1902, Stuttgart

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

The Crisis in Our Party

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

When a prolonged, stubborn and fierce struggle is in progress, there usually comes a moment when central and fundamental points at issue assume prominence, points upon the decision of which the ultimate outcome of the campaign depends, and in comparison with which all the minor and petty episodes of the struggle recede more and more into the background.

That is how matters stand with regard to the struggle within our Party, which for six months already has been riveting the attention of all Party members. And precisely because in the study of the whole struggle herein presented to the reader I have had to allude to many points of detail* which are of infinitesimal interest, and to many squabbles* which at bottom are of no interest whatever, I should like from the very outset to draw the reader's attention to two really central and fundamental points, points which are of tremendous interest, which are unquestionably of historical significance, and which are the most urgent political questions at issue in our Party today.

The first question concerns the political significance of the division of our Party into a "majority" and a "minority" which took shape at the Second Party Congress and relegated all previous divisions among Russian Social-Democrats to the distant background.

The second question concerns the significance in point of principle of the position taken up by the new *Iskra* on questions of organization, in so far as this position is really one of principle.

The first question relates to the starting point of the struggle in our Party, its source, its causes, and its fundamental political character. The second question relates to the ultimate outcome of the struggle, its finale, the sum-total of principles resulting from the addition of all that relates to the realm of principle and the subtraction of all that relates to the realm of

* Omitted in the present edition.—*Ed.*

squabbling. The answer to the first question is obtained by analysing the struggle at the Party Congress; the answer to the second, by analysing what is new in the principles of the new *Iskra*. This twofold analysis, which constitutes nine-tenths of my pamphlet, leads to the conclusion that the "majority" is the revolutionary, and the "minority" the opportunist wing of our Party; the dissensions that divide the two wings at the present moment for the most part concern only questions of organization, and not questions of program or tactics; the new system of views of the new *Iskra*—which emerges the more clearly, the more it tries to lend profundity to its position and the more that position becomes cleared of all these squabbles about co-option—is opportunism in matters of organization.

The principal shortcoming of the existing literature on the crisis in our Party is, as far as the study and interpretation of facts are concerned, that hardly any analysis has been made of the minutes of the Party Congress, and as far as the elucidation of fundamental principles of organization is concerned, that no analysis has been made of the connection which unquestionably exists between the basic error Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod made in their formulation of the first paragraph of the Rules and their defence of that formulation, on the one hand, and the whole "system" (in so far as one can speak of a system here at all) of the present principles of the *Iskra* on the question of organization, on the other. Apparently, the present editors of the *Iskra* do not even notice this connection, although in the writings of the "majority" the importance of the dispute over paragraph one has been referred to again and again. As a matter of fact, Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov are now only deepening, developing and extending their initial error with regard to paragraph one. As a matter of fact, *the entire position of the opportunists on questions of organization* already began to be revealed in the controversy over paragraph one: their advocacy of a diffuse, not strongly welded, Party organization; their hostility to the idea (the "bureaucratic" idea) of building the Party from the top downwards, starting from the Party Congress and the bodies set up by it; their tendency to proceed from the bottom upwards, which would allow every professor, every high school student and "every striker" to declare himself a member of the Party; their hostility to the "formalism" which demands that a Party member belong to an organization recognized by the Party; their inclination towards the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who is only prepared "platonically to recognize organizational relations"; their penchant for opportunist profundity and for anarchist phrases; their partiality for autonomy as against centralism—in a word, all that is now blossoming so luxuriantly in the new *Iskra*, and is helping more and more towards a complete and graphic elucidation of the initial error.

As for the minutes of the Party Congress, the truly undeserved neglect of them can only be accounted for by the way our controversies have been cluttered by squabbles, and possibly by the fact that these minutes contain too large an amount of very unpalatable truth. The minutes of the Party

Congress present a picture of the actual state of affairs in our Party that is unique and invaluable for its accuracy, completeness, comprehensiveness, richness and authenticity; a picture of views, sentiments and plans drawn by the participants in the movement themselves; a picture of the political shades existing in the Party, showing their relative strength, their mutual relations and their struggles. It is the minutes of the Party Congress, and only these minutes, that show to what extent we have really succeeded in making a clean sweep of all the survivals of the old, narrow, circle ties and in substituting for them a single great party tie. It is the duty of every Party member who wishes to take an intelligent share in the affairs of his Party to make a careful study of our Party Congress. I say study advisedly, for the mere perusal of the mass of raw material contained in the minutes is not enough to give a picture of the Congress. Only by careful and independent study can one reach (as one should) a stage where the brief digests of the speeches, the dry excerpts from the debates, the petty skirmishes over minor (seemingly minor) issues will combine to form one whole, and enable the Party member to conjure up before his eyes the living figure of each important speaker and to obtain a full idea of the political complexion of each group of delegates to the Party Congress. If the writer of these lines only succeeds in giving the reader an impetus to a broad and independent study of the minutes of the Party Congress, he will not regard his work in vain.

One more word to the opponents of Social-Democracy. They gloat and grimace over our controversies; and, of course, they will try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the defects and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows. As for our opponents, let them try to give us a picture of the *true* state of affairs in their own "parties" even remotely approximating that given by the minutes of our Second Congress!

May 1904

N. Lenin

A. THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS

The *Iskra* at the very outset, in its advance announcement in 1900, declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn. The *Iskra* tried to convert the Conference of 1902 into a private meeting and not a Party Congress.* The *Iskra* acted with extreme caution in the summer and autumn of 1902 when it revived the Organization Committee** elected at that conference. At last the work of demarcation was completed—as was generally admitted by us. The Organization Committee was set up at the very end of 1902. The *Iskra* welcomed its consolidation and, in an *editorial* article in its 32nd issue declared that the calling of a Party Congress was a matter of the *utmost urgency* and immediacy. Hence the last thing we can be accused of is having been precipitate in convening the Second Congress. We were, in fact, guided by the maxim: "measure your cloth seven times before you cut it."

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VARIOUS GROUPINGS AT THE CONGRESS

What was the principal task of the Congress? It was to create a *real* party on that basis of principles and organization which had been advanced and elaborated by the *Iskra*. That this was the direction in which the Congress had to work was predetermined by the activities of the *Iskra* over a period of three years and by the fact of its recognition by the majority of the committees. The *Iskra's* program and policy were to become the program and policy of the Party; the *Iskra's* organizational plans were to be embodied in the rules of organization of the Party. But needless to say, this result could not be secured without a fight; the highly representative character of the Congress ensured the presence both of organizations which had vigorously fought the *Iskra* (the Bund and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*) and of organizations which, while verbally recognizing the *Iskra* as the leading organ, actually pursued plans of their own and were unstable in matters of principle (the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and delegates from several of the committees who were closely allied to it). This being the case, the Congress

* See Minutes of the Second Congress, p. 20.

** The Organization Committee for the purpose of convening the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was set up in March 1902 at a conference held in Byelostok.—*Ed.*

could not avoid becoming *a field of battle for the victory of the "Iskra" trend*. That the Congress did become such a field of battle will at once be apparent to all who peruse its minutes with any amount of attention. It is now our task to trace in detail the principal groupings that were revealed on the various issues at the Congress and to reconstruct, using the precise data of the minutes, the political complexion of each of the main groups. What precisely did they represent, these groups, trends and shades which were to unite *in one party at the Congress under the guidance of the Iskra?* —that is the question we have to answer by analysing the debates and the voting. The elucidation of this point is of cardinal importance both for a study of what our Social-Democrats really stand for and for a comprehension of the causes of the differences among them.

C. BEGINNING OF THE CONGRESS. THE EPISODE OF THE ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

It will be most convenient of all to analyse the debates and the voting in the order of the sittings of the Congress, so as successively to note the political shades as they became more and more apparent. Departures from the chronological order for the purpose of considering closely allied questions of similar groupings in conjunction will be made only when absolutely essential. For the sake of impartiality, we shall endeavour to mention *all* the more important votes, omitting, of course, the innumerable votes on minor issues which took up an inordinate amount of time at our Congress (partly owing to our inexperience and to our inefficiency in dividing the material between the commissions and the plenary sittings, and partly owing to protraction which bordered on obstruction).

The first question to evoke a debate which began to reveal differences of shades was whether first place should be given (on the "agenda" of the Congress) to the item: "Position of the Bund in the Party" (*Minutes*, pp. 29-33). From the standpoint of the *Iskra*-ites, which was advocated by Plekhanov, Martov, Trotsky and myself, there could be no doubt on this point. The Bund's withdrawal from the Party offers graphic confirmation of our views: if the Bund refused to go our way and to accept the principles or organization which the majority of the Party shared with the *Iskra*, it would be useless and senseless to "pretend" that we were going the same way and only drag out the Congress (as the Bundists did drag it out). The question had already been made abundantly clear in the literature on the subject, and it was apparent to any thoughtful Party member that the only thing that remained was to put the question frankly, and bluntly and honestly make the choice: autonomy (in which case we go the same way) or federation (in which case our ways part).

Always evasive in policy, the Bundists wished to be evasive here too and to protract the matter. They were joined by Comrade Akimov, who.

evidently on behalf of all the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, at once gave prominence to the differences with the *Iskra* over questions of organization (*Minutes*, p. 31). The Bund and the *Rabocheye Dyelo* were supported by Comrade Makhov (representing two votes of the Nikolayev Committee—which had not long prior to this expressed its solidarity with the *Iskra*!). The question was altogether unclear in Comrade Makhov's opinion, and another "ticklish point," he considered, was, "whether we needed a democratic system or, on the contrary (mark this!), centralism."

Thus the *Iskra*-ites were opposed by the Bund, the *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Comrade Makhov, who together controlled the ten votes which were cast against us (p. 33). *Thirty votes* were cast *in favour*—this is the figure, as we shall see later, around which the vote of the *Iskra*-ites often fluctuated. Eleven abstained, apparently not taking the side of either of the contending "parties." It is interesting to note that when we took the vote on § 2 of the Rules of the Bund (it was the rejection of this § 2 which induced the Bund to withdraw from the Party), the votes in favour and the abstentions again amounted to ten (*Minutes*, p. 289), those who abstained being the three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (Brouckère, Martynov and Akimov) and Comrade Makhov. Clearly, the grouping shown in the vote on the *place* of the Bund item *on the agenda* was *not fortuitous*. Clearly, all these comrades differed with the *Iskra* not only on the technical question of the order of discussion, but *in essence as well*.

After the vote on the place of the Bund item on the agenda, the question of the *Borba* group arose at the Congress; it too led to an extremely interesting grouping and was closely bound up with the most "ticklish" point at the Congress, namely, the personal composition of the central bodies. The commission appointed to determine the composition of the Congress had pronounced against inviting the *Borba* group, in accordance with a *twice-adopted* decision of the Organization Committee (see *Minutes*, p. 383 and p. 375) and the report *of its representatives on the commission* (p. 35).

Comrade Egorov, *a member of the Organization Committee*, declared that "the question of the *Borba* (mark, of the *Borba*, and not of any particular member of this group) was something new to him"; and he demanded the adjournment. How a question on which a decision had twice been taken by the Organization Committee could be new to a member of the Organization Committee is a mystery. During the adjournment a meeting of the Organization Committee was held (*Minutes*, p. 40), attended by such of its members as happened to be at the Congress (several members of the Organization Committee, old members of the *Iskra* organization, were not present at the Congress). A discussion over the *Borba* began. The *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (Martynov, Akimov and Brouckère—pp. 36-38) proclaimed in favour, the *Iskra*-ites (Pavlovich, Sorokin, Lange, Trotsky, Martov and others) against. Again the Congress split into the already familiar groupings. The struggle over the *Borba* was a stubborn one, and Comrade Martov made a very circumstantial (p. 38) and "militant" speech, in which he

justly pointed to the "inequality of representation" of the Russian and foreign groups, and said that it would hardly be "well" to allow a foreign group any "privilege" (words of gold, which are particularly edifying today in the light of the events that have occurred since the Congress!), and that we should not encourage "the organizational chaos in the Party that was marked by a disunity which was not necessitated by any considerations of principle."

Apart from the followers of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, *nobody* came out openly and with reasoned motives on behalf of *Borba* until the list of speakers was closed (p. 40).

After the list of speakers had been closed, when it was already out of order to speak *on the point at issue*, Comrade Egorov "insistently demanded that the decision just adopted by the Organization Committee should be heard." *It is not surprising that the delegates were outraged by this manoeuvre*, and Comrade Plekhanov, the chairman, expressed his "astonishment that Comrade Egorov should insist upon his demand." Two courses were open, one would think: either to express oneself frankly and definitely to the Congress on the question at issue, or to say nothing at all. But to allow the list of speakers to be closed and then, under the guise of a "reply to the debate," to treat the Congress to a *new* decision of the Organization Committee—and on the very subject under discussion—was like a stab in the back!

The sitting was resumed after dinner, and the Bureau, still in perplexity, decided to waive "formalities" and to resort to the method of "comradely explanation," a method adopted at congresses only in extreme cases, as a last resort. Popov, the representative of the Organization Committee, announced the decision of the Organization Committee, which had been supported by all its members except one, Pavlovich (p. 43), and which recommended the Congress to invite Ryazanov.

Pavlovich declared that he had continued to deny the legitimacy of the meeting of the Organization Committee, and that its new decision "*contradicts its earlier decision.*" This statement caused a furore. Comrade Egorov, also a member of the Organization Committee and a member of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, evaded a plain answer on the actual subject in dispute and tried to shift the issue to one of discipline. He claimed that Comrade Pavlovich had violated Party discipline [!], for, having heard his protest, the Organization Committee had decided "not to lay Pavlovich's dissenting opinion before the Congress." The debate now centred around a question of Party discipline, and Plekhanov, amid the loud applause of the delegates, explained for the edification of Comrade Egorov that "*we have no such thing as imperative mandates*" (p. 42; *cf.* p. 379, Standing Orders of the Congress § 7: "The powers of delegates must not be restricted by imperative mandates. Delegates are absolutely free and independent in the exercise of their powers"). "The Congress is the supreme Party body," and, consequently, he violates Party discipline and the standing orders of the Congress who in any way restricts a delegate in addressing the Congress

directly on *any* question, without exception, affecting the life of the Party. The issue was thus reduced to the dilemma: the circle spirit or the Party spirit? Were the rights of the delegates to be restricted at the Congress for the sake of the imaginary rights or constitutions of the various bodies and circles, or were *all* lower bodies and old groups to be *completely*, and not nominally, disbanded before the Congress, pending the creation of really Party authoritative institutions. The reader already perceives how profoundly important from the standpoint of principle was this dispute at the very outset of the Congress (third sitting), a congress whose actual purpose it was to restore the Party. Around this dispute, as it were, concentrated the conflict between the old circles and groups (like *Yuzhny Rabochy*) and the renascent Party. And the anti-*Iskra* groups at once revealed themselves: Abramson, a Bundist, Comrade Martynov, an ardent ally of the present *Iskra* editorial board, and our friend Comrade Makhov all sided with Egorov and the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group against Pavlovich. Comrade Martynov, who is now vying with Martov and Axelrod in making great play of "democracy" in organization, even cited the example of . . . the army, where an appeal to a superior authority can be made only through the lower authority!! The true meaning of this "compact" anti-*Iskra* opposition was quite clear to anybody who was present at the Congress or who had carefully followed the internal history of our Party prior to the Congress. It was the purpose of the opposition (perhaps not always realized by all of its representatives, and sometimes pursued from force of inertia) to guard the independence, individualism and parochial interests of the small groups from being swallowed up in the broad Party that was being built on the *Iskra* principles.

It was just from this angle that the question was approached by Comrade Martov, who had not yet joined forces with Martynov. Comrade Martov vigorously took up the cudgels, and rightly so, against those whose "idea of Party discipline does not go beyond the duties of a revolutionary to the particular group of a *lower* order to which he belongs." "No *compulsory* [Martov's italics] grouping can be tolerated within a united Party," Martov explained to those who championed the methods of the circles, not foreseeing what a flail these words would be for his own political conduct at the end of the Congress and after. . . .

D. DISSOLUTION OF THE *YUZHNY RABOCHY* GROUP

The division of the delegates over the Organization Committee question may perhaps seem casual. But this opinion would be wrong, and in order to dispel it we shall depart from the chronological order and will now examine an episode which occurred at the end of the Congress, but which is very closely connected with the previous episode. This episode was the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group. The organizational trend of

the *Iskra*—complete union of the Party forces and removal of the chaos which divided them—here came into conflict with the interests of *one* of the groups, a group which had done useful work when there was no real party, but which had become superfluous when the work was being centralized. From the standpoint of its circle interests, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group was no less entitled than the old *Iskra* editorial board to lay claim to "continuity" and inviolability. But in the interests of the Party, this group should have submitted to the transfer of its forces to "the proper Party organizations" (p. 313, end of resolution adopted by the Congress). From the point of view of circle interests and "philistinism," the dissolution of a useful group, which no more desired it than the old *Iskra* editorial board, could not but seem a "ticklish matter" (the expression used by Comrade Russov and Comrade Deutsch). But from the point of view of the interests of the Party, its dissolution, "solution" into the Party (Gussev's expression) was essential. The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group bluntly declared that it "did not consider it necessary" to proclaim itself dissolved and demanded that "the Congress definitely pronounce its opinion" and, what is more, "immediately: yes or no." The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group openly claimed the "continuity" to which the old *Iskra* editorial board began to lay claim . . . after it had been dissolved! "Although we are all individually members of a united party," Comrade Egorov said, "it nevertheless consists of a number of organizations with which we have to reckon as *historical magnitudes. . . .* If such an organization *is not detrimental to the Party, there is no need to dissolve it.*"

Thus an important question of *principle* was quite definitely raised, and all the *Iskra*-ites—inasmuch as their own circle interests had not yet taken the upper hand—took a decisive stand against the unstable elements (the Bundists and two of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites had already withdrawn from the Congress; they would undoubtedly have been heart and soul in favour of "reckoning with historical magnitudes"). The result of the vote was *thirty-one for,* five against and five abstentions (the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and one other, that of Belov, most likely, judging by his earlier pronouncements, p. 308). A group of *ten votes* distinctly opposed to the *Iskra's* consistent organizational plan and defending the circle principle as against the Party principle, are here quite definitely to be discerned in the debate; the *Iskra*-ites treated the question precisely from the standpoint of principle (see Lange's speech, p. 315), opposing amateurishness and disunity, refusing to pay heed to the "sympathies" of individual organizations, and plainly declaring that "if the comrades of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*" had adhered more strictly to principle earlier, a year or two ago, the unity of the Party and the triumph of the program principles we have sanctioned here would have been achieved sooner. This was the spirit expressed by Orlov, by Gussev, by Lyadov, by Muravyov, by Russov, by Pavlovich, by Glebov and by Gorin. Far from protesting against these definite references, repeatedly made at the Con-

gress, to the lack of principle in the policy and "line" of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*, of Makhov and others, far from making any reservation on this score, the *Iskra*-ites of the "minority," in the person of Deutsch, vigorously associated themselves with these views, condemned "chaos" and welcomed the "blunt statement of the question" (p. 315) by Comrade Russov.

Among the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, the proposal to dissolve it evoked the most passionate indignation, traces of which are to be found in the minutes (it should not be forgotten that the minutes offer only a pale reflection of the debates, for they do not give the full speeches but only very condensed summaries and extracts). Comrade Egorov even called the bare reference to the *Rabochaya Mysl* group in conjunction with the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group a "lie"—a characteristic illustration of the attitude towards consistent Economism that prevailed at the Congress. Even much later, at the 37th sitting, Egorov spoke of the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group with the utmost irritation (p. 356), requesting to have it recorded in the minutes that during the discussion on the *Yuzhny Rabochy* the members of this group were not asked either about publication funds or about control by the Central Organ and the Central Committee. During the discussion on the *Yuzhny Rabochy,* Comrade Popov hinted at a compact majority which was supposed to have predetermined the fate of this group. "Now," he said (p. 316), *"after the speeches of Comrades Gussev and Orlov, everything is clear."* The meaning of these words is unmistakable: now, after the *Iskra*-ites had stated their opinion and had moved a resolution, everything was clear, that is, it was clear that the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group would be dissolved against its wishes.

E. THE EQUALITY OF LANGUAGES EPISODE

Let us return and examine the Congress sittings in their proper order.

We have now convincingly seen that even before the Congress proceeded to discuss its actual business, there were already clearly revealed not only a perfectly definite group of anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes), but also a group of intermediate and unstable elements who were prepared to support the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites and increase their votes to roughly sixteen or eighteen.

The question of the place of the Bund in the Party, which was discussed at the Congress in extreme detail—excessive detail—reduced itself to laying down a thesis in principle, while its practical decision was postponed until the discussion on organization. In view of the fact that quite a lot of space had been devoted in pre-Congress publications to the subjects pertaining to this question, very little that was new was said at the Congress. It must however be mentioned that the supporters of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Martynov, Akimov and Brouckère) agreed with Martov's resolution, only with the reservation that they realized its inadequacy and differed with its conclusions (pp. 69, 73, 83, and 86).

Having discussed the place of the Bund, the Congress proceeded to consider the program. The discussion under this head mostly centred around particular amendments of slight interest. The opposition of the anti-*Iskra*-ites on matters of principle found expression only in Comrade Martynov's onslaught on the famous question of spontaneity and consciousness. Martynov, of course, was backed by the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites to a man. The unsoundness of his objections was pointed out, incidentally, by Martov and Plekhanov. It should be noted as a curiosity that the *Iskra* editorial board have now taken their stand with Martynov and are saying the very opposite of what they said at the Congress!

Passing over the dispute about the adoption of *Iskra* as the central organ and the beginning of the debate on the Rules (which it will be more convenient to examine in connection with the whole discussion of the Rules), let us proceed to consider the shades of principle that were revealed during the discussion of the program. Let us first note one detail of a highly characteristic nature, namely, the debate on proportional representation. Comrade Egorov of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* advocated the inclusion of this point in the program, and did so in a way that called forth the justified remark from Posadovsky (an *Iskra*-ite of the minority) about "a serious difference of opinion." "It is unquestionable," said Comrade Posadovsky, "that we do not agree on the following basic question: *must we subordinate our future policy to certain fundamental democratic principles and attribute absolute value to them,* or *must all democratic principles be exclusively subordinated to the interests of our Party?* I am decidedly in favour of the latter." Plekhanov "fully associated himself" with Posadovsky, objecting in even more definite and decisive terms to "the absolute value of democratic principles" and to regarding them "abstractly." "Hypothetically," he said, "a case is conceivable where we Social-Democrats may oppose universal suffrage. There was a time when the bourgeoisie of the Italian republics deprived members of the nobility of political rights. The revolutionary proletariat might restrict the political rights of the upper classes just as the upper classes at one time restricted its political rights." Plekhanov's speech was greeted with applause and *hisses,* and when Plekhanov protested against somebody's *Zwischenruf,** "You should not hiss," and requested the comrades not to restrain their demonstrations, Comrade Egorov rose and said: "Since such speeches call forth applause, I am obliged to hiss." Together with Comrade Goldblatt (a Bund delegate), Comrade Egorov spoke in opposition to the views of Posadovsky and Plekhanov. Unfortunately, the debate was closed, and the question it gave rise to immediately receded into the background.

The difference was revealed even more distinctly in the discussion on "equality of languages" (*Minutes,* pp. 171 *et seq.*) On this point it was not so much the debate that was so eloquent as the votings: adding them to-

* *Zwischenruf*—an interjection from the body of the hall.—*Ed.*

gether, we get the incredible number of *sixteen*! Over what? Over whether it was enough to stipulate in the program the equality of all citizens, irrespective of sex, etc., *and language*, or whether it was necessary to stipulate "freedom of language" or "equality of languages." Comrade Martov characterized this episode pretty accurately at the League Congress when he said that "a trifling dispute over the formulation of one clause of the program acquired fundamental significance because half the Congress was prepared to overthrow the Program Commission." Just so. The immediate cause of the conflict was indeed trifling, yet it assumed a truly *fundamental* character, and, consequently, frightfully bitter forms, going to the length even of attempts to "*overthrow*" the Program Commission, to the voicing of the suspicion that there was a desire "*to mislead the Congress*" (of which Egorov suspected Martov!), and to personal remarks ... remarks of the most abusive kind (p. 178). Even Comrade Popov "expressed regret that mere trifles had given rise to *such an atmosphere*" (my italics, p. 182) as reigned during the course of three sittings (16th, 17th and 18th).

All these expressions are perfectly explicit and positively indicative of the eloquent fact that the atmosphere of "suspicion" and of the most bitter forms of conflict ("overthrowing")—which was later, at the League Congress, laid at the door of the *Iskra*-ite majority!—actually arose *long before we split into a majority and a minority*. It was not cutting remarks and witticisms that gave rise to the conflict—they were only a *symptom* of the fact that the very political grouping at the Congress harboured a "contradiction," that it harboured all the makings of a conflict, that it harboured an internal heterogeneity which burst forth with imminent force at the least pretext, even the *most trifling*.

From the standpoint from which I regard the Congress the desperately acute conflict of a *fundamental* character which arose from a "trifling" cause is quite explicable and inevitable. Inasmuch as a struggle between the *Iskra*-ites and the anti-*Iskra*-ites went on *all the time* at the Congress, inasmuch as between them stood the unstable elements, and inasmuch as the latter, together with the anti-*Iskra*-ites, controlled one-third of the votes ($8+10=18$, out of 51, according to my calculation, an approximate one, of course), it is perfectly clear and natural that *any falling away from the "Iskra"-ites of even a small minority* should create the possibility of a victory for the anti-*Iskra* trend and should therefore call forth a "frantic" struggle. This was not the result of inappropriate cutting remarks and attacks but of a political combination. It was not that cutting remarks gave rise to a political conflict, but that the existence of a political conflict in the very grouping at the Congress gave rise to cutting remarks and attacks—in this juxtaposition lies the root of the fundamental difference between our estimate and Martov's of the political significance of the Congress and its results.

During the Congress there were in all three major cases of a small number of *Iskra*-ites falling away from the majority—over the question of equal-

ity of languages, over § 1 of the Rules, and over the elections—and in all three cases a bitter struggle resulted, leading in the end to the severe crisis we have in the Party today. If we want to get a political understanding of this crisis and of this struggle, we must examine the political grouping of the shades that clashed at the Congress.

The war opened with a dispute between Comrade Martov and Comrade Lieber, the leader of the Bundists (pp. 171-72). Martov argued that the demand for "equality of citizens" was enough. "Freedom of language" was rejected, but "equality of languages" was at once proposed, and Comrade Egorov joined Lieber in the fray. Martov declared that it was *fetishism* "when speakers insist on saying that nationalities are equal and transfer inequality to the sphere of language, whereas it is from just the opposite angle that the question should be examined: inequality of nationalities exists, and one of its expressions is that people belonging to certain nations are deprived of the right to use their mother tongue" (p. 172).

The grouping of the delegates in this fight is made particularly clear by the abundant roll-call votes. There were as many as three. The *Iskra* nucleus was solidly opposed all the time by the anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes) and, with very slight fluctuations, by the whole Centre (Makhov, Lvov, Egorov, Popov, Medvedyev, Ivanov, Tsaryov and Belov—only the last two vacillated at first, sometimes abstaining, sometimes voting with us, and it was only during the third vote that their position became fully defined). Of the *Iskra*-ites, several fell away—chiefly the Caucasians (three with six votes)—and thanks to this, the "fetishist" trend in the long run gained the upper hand. During the third vote, when the followers of both trends had clarified their position most fully, the three Caucasians, with six votes, broke away from the *Iskra*-ite majority and went over to the other side: two delegates—Posadovsky and Kostich—with two votes, fell away from the *Iskra*-ite minority; the following went over to the other side or abstained during the first two votes: Lensky, Stepanov and Gorsky of the *Iskra*-ite majority, and Deutsch of the minority. *The falling away of eight "Iskra" votes (out of a total of thirty-three) gave the superiority to the coalition of the anti-"Iskra"-ites and the unstable elements.* It was just this *basic fact* of the Congress grouping which was repeated (only *other Iskra*-ites falling away) during the vote on § 1 of the Rules and during the elections.

F. THE AGRARIAN PROGRAM

The inconsistency of principle of the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Centre" was also clearly brought out by the debate on the agrarian program which took up so much time at the Congress (see *Minutes*, pp. 190-226) and raised quite a number of extremely interesting questions. As was to be expected, the campaign against the program was launched by Comrade

Martynov (after a few remarks by Comrades Lieber and Egorov). He brought out the old argument about correcting "this particular historical injustice,"* whereby, he claimed, we were indirectly "sanctifying other historical injustices," and so on. He was joined by Comrade Egorov, to whom even "the significance of this program is unclear. Is it a program for ourselves, that is, does it define our demands, or do we want to make it popular?" (! ? ! ?) Comrade Lieber "would like to make the same points as Comrade Egorov." Comrade Makhov spoke with his characteristic decisiveness and declared that "the majority [?] of the speakers positively cannot understand what the proposed program means and what its aims are." The program submitted, you see, "can hardly be regarded as a Social-Democratic agrarian program"; it ... "smacks somewhat of a game at correcting historical injustices"; it bears "the stamp of demagogy and adventurism." As a theoretical justification of this profound remark we get the caricature and over-simplification so customary in vulgar Marxism: the *Iskra*-ites, we are told, "want to treat the peasants as though their composition were homogeneous; but as the peasantry has split up into classes long ago [?], putting forward a single program must inevitably render the whole program demagogic and turn it into a dubious venture when put into practice" (p. 202). Comrade Makhov here "blurted out" the real reason why our agrarian program meets with the disapproval of many Social-Democrats who are prepared to recognize the *Iskra* (as Makhov himself did), but who have absolutely failed to grasp its trend, its theoretical and practical position. It was the vulgarization of Marxism as applied to present-day Russian peasant economy, with all its complexity and variety, and not differences over particular issues, that gave rise, and still gives rise, to the failure to understand this program. And it was on this vulgar Marxist standpoint that the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements (Lieber and Martynov) and of the "Centre" (Egorov and Makhov) so quickly found common ground. Comrade Egorov gave frank expression also to one of the characteristic traits of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* and of the groups and circles, gravitating towards it, namely, their failure to grasp the importance of the peasant movement, their failure to grasp that it was an underestimation rather than an overestimation of the importance of the movement (and a lack of forces to utilize it) that was the weak side of our Social-Democrats at the time of the first famous peasant revolts. "I am far from sharing the infatuation of the editorial board for the peasant movement," said Comrade Egorov, "an infatuation with which many Social-Democrats have been affected since the peasant disorders." But, unfortunately, Comrade Egorov did not take the trouble to give the Congress any precise idea of what this infatuation of the *editorial board* consisted in; he did not take the trouble to give any

*This refers to the demand made in the agrarian program of the R.S.D.L.P. that the so-called *otrezki*—*i.e.*, the better portions of land essential to peasant farming which were cut off, or inclosed, for the benefit of the landlords at the time of the abolition of serfdom in 1861—be returned to the peasants.—*Ed.*

specific reference to the material published by the *Iskra*. Moreover, he forgot that *all* the basic points of our agrarian program had already been developed by the *Iskra* in its third issue,* that is *long* before the peasant unrest.** He whose "recognition" of the *Iskra* is not merely a verbal one would do well to pay a little more heed to its theoretical and tactical principles.

"No, we cannot do much among the peasants!"—Comrade Egorov exclaimed, and went on to explain that this exclamation was not meant as a protest against any particular "infatuation," but as a denial of our entire position: "that means that our slogan cannot compete with an adventurist slogan." A most characteristic formulation revealing the lack of principle in this attitude, which reduces everything to "competition" between the slogans of different parties! And this was said after the speaker had announced his "satisfaction" with the theoretical explanations, in which it was stated that we were striving for lasting success in our agitation, undeterred by temporary failures, and that lasting success (despite the clamour of momentary "competitors") was impossible without a firm theoretical basis to the program (p. 196). What confusion is disclosed by this assurance of "satisfaction," immediately followed as it was by a repetition of the vulgar precepts inherited from the old Economism, for which the "competition of slogans" decided everything—not only the agrarian question, but the entire program and tactics of the economic and political struggle! "You will not induce the agricultural labourer," Comrade Egorov said, "to fight side by side with the rich peasant for the *otrezki*, which to no small extent are already in the hands of the rich peasant."

There again you have the over-simplification that is undoubtedly akin to our opportunist Economism, which insisted that it was impossible to "induce" the proletarian to fight for what was to no small extent in the hands of the bourgeoisie and would fall into its hands to an even larger extent in the future. There again you have the vulgarization that forgets the Russian peculiarities of the general capitalist relations between the agricultural labourer and the rich peasant. The *otrezki* are now a sore point, and they are a sore point in fact with the agricultural labourer *as well*, who does not have to be "induced" to fight for emancipation from his state of servitude. It is certain intellectuals who have to be "induced"—induced to take a wider view of their tasks, induced to renounce stereotyped formulas when discussing specific questions, induced to take account of the historial situation, which complicates and modifies our aims. It is in fact only the prejudice *that the muzhik is stupid*—a prejudice which, as Comrade Martov justly remarked (p. 202) was to be detected in the speeches of Comrade Makhov and the other opponents of the agrarian program—only this prej-

* See "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II.—*Ed.*

** The reference is to the peasant revolts of 1902 in the Poltava, Kharkov and other provinces.—*Ed.*

udice explains why they forget the actual conditions of life of our agricultural labourers.

Having simplified the question down to a naked contrast of worker and capitalist, the spokesmen of the "Centre" tried, as usual, to ascribe their own narrow-mindedness to the muzhik. "It is just because I consider the muzhik, within the limits of his narrow class outlook, a clever fellow," Comrade Makhov remarked, "that I believe he will stand for the petty-bourgeois ideal of seizure and division." Two things are obviously confused here: the description of the class outlook of the muzhik as that of a petty bourgeois, *and the narrowing down*, the reduction, of *this* outlook to "narrow limits." It is in this reduction that the mistake of the Egorovs and Makhovs lies (just as the mistake of the Martynovs and Akimovs lay in reducing the outlook of the proletarian to "narrow limits"). Yet both logic and history teach us that the petty-bourgeois class outlook may be more or less narrow and more or less progressive, just because of the dual status of the petty bourgeois. And far from dropping our hands in despair because of this narrowness ("stupidity") of the muzhik or because he is governed by "prejudice," we must work steadily to widen his outlook and to help his reason triumph over his prejudice.

The vulgar "Marxist" view of the Russian agrarian question found its culmination in the concluding words of Comrade Makhov's speech, in which that faithful champion of the old *Iskra* editorial board set forth his principles. It was not for nothing that these words were greeted with applause... ironical applause, to be sure. "I do not know, of course, what to call a misfortune," said Comrade Makhov, outraged by Plekhanov's statement that we were not at all alarmed by the movement for a black redistribution,* and that it is not we who would attempt to check this progressive (bourgeois progressive) movement. "But this revolution, if it can be called such, would not be a revolutionary one. It would be truer to call it, not revolution, but reaction [*laughter*], a revolution that was more like a riot.... Such a revolution would throw us back, and it would require a certain amount of time before we got back to the position we are in today. Today we have far more than during the French Revolution [*ironical applause*], we have a Social-Democratic Party" [*laughter*]....

We thus find that even on the questions of pure principle raised by the agrarian program, the already familiar grouping at once appeared. The anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes) launched into the fray on behalf of vulgar Marxism, and the leaders of the "Centre," the Egorovs and the Makhovs, trailed after them, gradually erring and straying into the same narrow outlook. It is therefore quite natural that the voting on certain points of the agrarian program should result in 30 and 35 votes in favour (pp. 225 and 226), that is, approximately the same figure as we observed in the dispute over the

* *Movement for a black redistribution*—a peasant movement in favour of a revolutionary redistribution of the landed estates.—*Ed.*

order of discussion of the Bund question, in the Organization Committee episode, and in the question of dissolving the *Yuzhny Rabochy*. An issue had only to arise which in any way departed from the usual and established stereotype and demanded any independent application of Marxist theory to social and economic relations that were new (to the Germans) and peculiar, and we immediately find that the *Iskra*-ites who were able to cope with the problems had only three-fifths of the vote, and that the whole "Centre" turned and followed the Liebers and the Martynovs.

The debate on the agrarian program gives a clear picture of the struggle of the *Iskra*-ites against a good two-fifths of the Congress. On this question the Caucasian delegates took up an absolutely correct stand—due largely to the fact, apparently, that a close acquaintance with their numerous local feudal survivals warned them against the schoolboyish abstract and naked contrasts which satisfied the Makhovs. Martynov, Lieber, Makhov and Egorov were combated by Plekhanov, by Gussev (who declared that he had had "frequent occasion to meet such a pessimistic view of our work in the countryside"... as Comrade Egorov's ... "among the comrades active in Russia"), by Kostrov, by Karsky and by Trotsky. The latter rightly remarked that the "well-meant advice" of the critics of the agrarian program "smacked too much of *philistinism*."

Referring to the arguments which smacked of "philistinism," Trotsky declared that "in the approaching period of revolution we must form ties with the peasantry".... "In face of this task, the scepticism and political 'far-sightedness' of Makhov and Egorov are more harmful than any short-sightedness." Comrade Kostich, another minority *Iskra*-ite, very aptly pointed to the "lack of confidence in himself, in the stability of his principles" displayed by Comrade Makhov, a description which fits our "Centre" admirably. "In his pessimism," Comrade Kostich continued, "Comrade Makhov is at one with Comrade Egorov, although they differ as to shades. He forgets that the Social-Democrats are already working among the peasantry, are already directing their movement as far as possible. And their pessimism in narrowing the scope of our work." (P. 210.)

To conclude our examination of the discussion of the program at the Congress, mention should be made of the brief debate on the subject of supporting oppositional trends. Our program clearly states that the Social-Democratic Party supports "every *oppositional* and revolutionary movement *directed against the existing social and political order in Russia.*" It would seem that this last reservation makes it perfectly clear *exactly which* oppositional trends we support. Nevertheless, the various shades which had evolved long ago in our Party at once revealed themselves *here too,* difficult as it was to assume that any "perplexity or misunderstandings" were still possible on a question which had been digested so thoroughly! Evidently, the trouble lay not in misunderstandings, but in *shades.* Makhov, Lieber and Martynov at once sounded the alarm....

Makhov again began with a vulgar over-simplification of Marxism.

"Our only revolutionary class is the proletariat," he declared, and from this correct premise he at once drew an incorrect conclusion: "The rest are of no account, not worth anything [*general laughter*].... Yes, they are not worth anything; all they are out for is their own advantage. I am against supporting them." (P. 226.) Comrade Makhov's inimitable formulation of his position embarrassed many (of his supporters), but as a matter of fact Lieber and Martynov agreed with him when they proposed to delete the word "oppositional" or to restrict it by an addition: "democratic-oppositional." Plekhanov quite rightly took up the cudgels against this amendment of Martynov's. "We must criticize the liberals," he said, "expose their half-heartedness. That is true.... But, while exposing the narrowness and limitations of all movements other than the Social-Democratic, it is our duty to explain to the proletariat that even a constitution which does not confer universal suffrage would be a step forward compared with absolutism, and therefore it should not prefer the existing order to such a constitution." Comrades Martynov, Lieber and Makhov did not agree with this and stuck to their position, which was attacked by Axelrod, Starovyer and Trotsky and once more by Plekhanov. Meanwhile, Comrade Makhov managed to surpass himself. He had said at first that the other classes (other than the proletariat) were "of no account" and that he was "against supporting them." Then he condescended to admit that "while it is essentially reactionary, the bourgeoisie is sometimes revolutionary—for example, in the struggle against feudalism and its survivals." "But there are some groups," he continued, "which are always [?] reactionary—such as the handicraftsmen." Such are the gems of principle arrived at by those very leaders of our "Centre" who later foamed at the mouth in defence of the old editorial board! Even in Western Europe, where the guild system was so strong, the handicraftsmen, like the other petty bourgeois of the towns, were most revolutionary in the era of the fall of absolutism. And it is particularly absurd of a Russian Social-Democrat to repeat without reflection what our Western comrades say about the present-day handicraftsmen, the handicraftsmen of an era separated by a century or half a century from the fall of absolutism. To speak, in Russia, of the reactionary nature of the handicraftsmen on political questions compared with the bourgeoisie is merely to repeat a hackneyed phrase learnt by rote.*

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* Another leader of this same group, the "Centre," Comrade Egorov, spoke on the question of supporting the oppositional trends on a different occasion, in connection with Axelrod's resolution on the Socialist-Revolutionaries (p. 359). Comrade Egorov detected a "contradiction" between the demand in the program to *support* every oppositional and revolutionary movement and the *unfavourable* attitude towards both the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the liberals. In another form, and approaching the question from a somewhat different angle, Comrade Egorov here revealed the same narrow conception of Marxism, and the same unstable, semi-hostile attitude towards the position of the *Iskra* (which he had "recognized") as Comrades Makhov, Lieber and Martynov.

G. THE PARTY RULES

Having discussed the program, the Congress proceeded to the Party Rules (we pass over the question of the Central Organ and the delegates' reports, *which the majority of the delegates were unfortunately unable to* present in a satisfactory form). It need hardly be said that the Party Rules were of the utmost importance to all of us. After all, the *Iskra* had acted from the very outset not only as a periodical but as an *organizational* nucleus. In an editorial in its fourth issue ("Where To Begin?") the *Iskra* had set forth a whole plan of organization, a plan which it pursued systematically and steadily over a period of *three years*. When the Second Party Congress adopted the *Iskra* as the central organ, two of the three points setting forth the motives of the resolution on the subject (p. 147) were devoted *just to this plan and these ideas of organization advocated by "Iskra,"* namely, its role in the leadership of the *practical* work of the Party and the leading part it played in the work of attaining unity. It is therefore quite natural that the work of the *Iskra* and the whole work of organizing the Party, the whole work of *actually* restoring the Party, *could not* be regarded as complete unless certain definite ideas of organization were recognized by the *whole Party and formally enacted. It was this task that the* rules of Party organization were to perform.

The principal ideas which the *Iskra* strove to make the basis of the Party's organization amounted essentially to the following two: first, the idea of *centralism, which defined in principle the method of deciding all* particular and detail questions of organization; second, the special function of an organ, a newspaper, for ideological leadership, an idea which took into account the temporary and special requirements of the Russian Social-Democratic labour movement amidst conditions of political slavery, on the understanding that the *primary* base of operations for the revolutionary assault would be set up abroad. The first idea, the only correct one in principle, was to permeate the whole Rules; the second, being a particular idea necessitated by temporary circumstances of place and mode of action, took the form of an *apparent* departure from centralism in the proposal to set up *two centres, a Central Organ and a Central Committee*. Both these principal *Iskra* ideas of Party organization had been developed by me in the *Iskra* editorial (No. 4) "Where To Begin?"* and in *What Is To Be Done?*** and, finally, were explained in detail in a form that practically resembled rules in "A Letter to a Comrade." Actually, all that remained was a certain amount of drafting in order to obtain the formulation of the paragraphs of the Rules which were to embody just those ideas, if the recognition of the *Iskra* was not to be merely nominal, a mere conventional phrase.

* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV.—*Ed.*

** See this volume, pp. 147-269.—*Ed.*

H. DISCUSSION ON CENTRALISM PRIOR TO THE SPLIT AMONG THE *ISKRA*-ITES

Before passing to the really interesting question of the formulation of § 1 of the Rules, a question which undoubtedly disclosed the existence of different shades of opinion, let us dwell a little on that brief general discussion of the Rules which occupied the 14th sitting and part of the 15th sitting of the Congress. Comrade Martov *associated himself* (p. 157) with my views on organization, only making the reservation that he differed on two *particular points*. Both the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Centre," on the contrary, at once launched into the fray against both the *basic* ideas of the *Iskra* plan of organization (and, consequently, against the Rules in their entirety), namely, centralism and the "two centres." Comrade Lieber referred to my Rules as "organized distrust" and discerned *decentralism* in the proposal for two centres (as did Comrades Popov and Egorov). Comrade Akimov expressed the desire that the jurisdiction of the local committees should be defined more widely, in particular, that "the right to alter their composition themselves" be conferred on them. "They should be allowed greater freedom of action.... The local committees should be elected by the active workers in their localities, just as the Central Committee is elected by the representatives of all the active organizations in Russia. But if even this cannot be allowed, let the number of members that the Central Committee may appoint to the local committees be limited...." (P. 158.) Comrade Akimov, as you see, suggested an argument against "hypertrophy of centralism," but Comrade Martov remained deaf to these weighty arguments until defeat over the question of the composition of the central bodies induced him to follow in Akimov's wake. At that time the only opponents of "monstrous centralism" were those to whom *Iskra's* centralism was clearly *disadvantageous*: it was opposed by Akimov, Lieber and Goldblatt, *followed*, cautiously and circumspectly (so that they could always turn back), by Egorov (see pp. 156 and 272) and others. At that time it was still clear to the vast majority in the Party that it was precisely the parochial, circle interests of the Bund, *Yuzhny Rabochy*, etc., that evoked the protest against centralism.

Take Comrade Goldblatt's speech, for example (pp. 160-61). He complains about my "monstrous" centralism, and claims, that it would lead to the "destruction" of the lower organizations, that it is "permeated through and through with the desire to confer unrestricted powers on the centre and the unrestricted right to interfere in everything," that it confers on the organizations "only one right—the right to submit without a murmur to orders from above," etc. "The centre proposed by the draft would find itself in a vacuum, it would have no peripheral organizations around it, but only an amorphous mass in which its executive agents would move." At the Congress the Bund was laughed at when it fought *our* centralism while *even more definitely* granting unrestricted rights to its *own* central body (for

example, to admit and expel members, and even to refuse to admit del gates to congresses).

The grouping was also clearly to be discerned over the question of th two central bodies: *all* the *Iskra*-ites were opposed by Lieber, by Akimov by Popov and by Egorov. The plan for two central bodies followed logi cally from the ideas of organization which the *old Iskra* had always ad vocated (and which had been approved, *verbally*, by Comrades Popov an Egorov!). The policy of the *old Iskra* militated against the plans of th *Yuzhny Rabochy, the plans to create a parallel popular organ and to con* vert it virtually into the dominant organ. There lies the root of the contra diction, so strange at a first glance, that all the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the en tire Marsh were in favour of one central body, that is, *of seemingly greate centralism*. Of course, there were delegates (especially among the Marsh) who scarcely had a clear idea where the organizational plans of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* would lead and were bound to lead in the course of things, but they were impelled to follow the anti-*Iskra*-ites by their own irresolute characters and lack of self-confidence.

Of the speeches by *Iskra*-ites during *this* debate on the Rules (the one preceding the split among the *Iskra*-ites), the most remarkable were those of Comrade Martov ("association" with my ideas of organization) and Trotsky. The latter answered Comrades Akimov and Lieber as follows: "The Rules, he [Comrade Akimov] said, do not define the jurisdiction of the Central Committee with enough precision. I cannot agree with him. On the contrary, this definition is precise and means that inasmuch as the Party is an entity, its control over the local committees must be ensured. Comrade Lieber, borrowing my expression, said that the Rules were 'organized distrust.' That is true. But I used this expression in reference to the rules proposed by the Bund spokesmen, which represented 'organized distrust' on the part of a section of the Party towards the whole Party. Our Rules, on the other hand, represent the organized distrust of the Party towards all its sections, that is, control over all local, district, national and other organizations." (P. 158.)

I. PARAGRAPH ONE OF THE RULES

In the footnote below* we quote the various formulations around which an interesting debate arose at the Congress. This debate took up nearly two sittings and ended with *two roll-call* votes (during the whole course of

* § 1 of my draft: "A Party member is one who accepts its program and who supports the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of the Party organizations."

§ 1 as formulated by Martov at the Congress and adopted by the Congress: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who accepts its program, supports the Party financially and renders it regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organizations."

the Congress, if I am not mistaken, there were only eight roll-call votes, which were resorted to only in very important cases because of the great loss of time they involved). The question at issue was undoubtedly one of principle. The interest of the Congress in the debate was tremendous. *All* the delegates voted—a rare occurrence at our Congress (as at any big congress) and one that likewise testifies to the interest shown by the disputants.

What, then, was the sum and substance of the matter in dispute? I have already said at the Congress and have since repeated it time and again that "I by no means consider our difference [over §1] so vital as to be a matter of life or death to the Party. We shall certainly not perish because of an unfortunate clause in the Rules!" (P. 250.)* Taken by itself, this difference, although it disclosed shades of principle, could never have called forth that divergence (actually, to speak unreservedly, that split) which took place after the Congress. But every *slight* difference may become a *big* difference if it is insisted on, if it is put into the foreground, if people *set about* searching for all the roots and branches of the difference. Every *slight* difference may assume *tremendous* importance if it serves as the starting point for a *turn* towards definite mistaken views, and if these mistaken views, by virtue of new and additional divergences, are combined with *anarchist* actions which bring the Party to the point of a split.

And that is just how matters stood in the present case. *Now*, the question has been *put* as follows: was Martov's formulation, which was supported by Axelrod, affected by his (or their) instability, wavering and political vagueness, as I expressed it at the Party Congress (p. 333), by his (or their) deviation towards Jaurèsism and anarchism, as Plekhanov surmised at the League Congress (League Minutes, p. 102 and elsewhere); or was my formulation, which was supported by Plekhanov, affected by a wrong, bureaucratic, formalistic, pompadour, un-Social-Democratic conception of centralism? *Opportunism and anarchism, or bureaucracy and formalism?*—that is the way the question *is being put now* that the slight difference has become a big difference. And when discussing the pros and cons of my formulation *on their merits*, we must *bear in mind* just *this* statement of the question, which has been forced upon us all by the events.

Let us begin the examination of these pros and cons with an analysis of the debate at the Congress. The first speech, that of Comrade Egorov, is interesting only for the fact that his attitude (*non liquet*, it is still not clear to me, I still do not know where the truth lies) is very characteristic of the attitude of many delegates who found it difficult to grasp the rights and wrongs of this really new and fairly complex and detailed question. The next speech, that of Comrade Axelrod, at once raised the question of principle. This was the first speech that Comrade Axelrod made at the Con-

* See "Report on Party Rules," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II.—*Ed.*

gress on questions of principle, or for that matter, the first speech he made at all, and it can scarcely be claimed that his début with the celebrated "professor" was particularly fortunate. "I think," Comrade Axelrod said, "that we must draw a distinction between the concepts Party and organization. Yet these two concepts are here being confused. And the confusion is dangerous." This was the first argument against my formulation. Examine it more closely. When I say that the Party should be a *sum* (and not a mere arithmetical sum, but a complex) of *organizations*,* does that mean that I "confuse" the concepts Party and organization? Of course not. I thereby express clearly and precisely my wish, my demand, that the Party, as the vanguard of the class, should be as *organized* as possible, that the Party should admit *to its ranks only such elements as lend themselves to at least a minimum of organization.* My opponent, on the contrary, wants to *confuse*, to mix organized elements and unorganized elements in the Party, persons who submit to direction and those who do not, the advanced and the incorrigibly backward—for the corrigibly backward may join the organization. *This confusion* is indeed *dangerous.* Comrade Axelrod further cited the "strictly secret and centralized organizations of the past" the "*Zemlya i Volya*" and the "*Narodnaya Volya*"): around them, he said, "were grouped a large number of people who did not belong to the organization but who helped it in one way or another and regarded themselves as Party members.... This principle should be even more strictly observed in the Social-Democratic organization." Here we come to one of the *nodal* points of the matter: is "this principle" really a Social-Democratic one—this principle which allows people who do not belong to any of the organizations of the Party and who only "help it in one way or another" to call themselves Party members? And Plekhanov gave the only possible reply to this question when he said: "Axelrod was wrong in citing the 'seventies. At that time there was a well-organized and splendidly disciplined central body; around it there were the organizations of various categories it had created; and outside these organizations there was nothing but chaos, anarchy. The component elements of this chaos called themselves party mem-

* The word "organization" is usually employed in two senses, a broad and a narrow one. In the narrow sense it signifies an individual nucleus of the human collective body, even if constituted to only a minimum degree. In the broad sense it signifies the sum of such nuclei welded into a single whole. For example, the navy, the army, or the state represents at one and the same time a sum of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word) and a variety of social organizations (in the broad sense of the word). The Department of Education is an organization (in the broad sense of the word) and consists of a number of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word). Similarly, the Party is an organization, and *should* be an organization (in the broad sense of the word); at the same time, the Party should consist of a number of various kinds of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word). Therefore, when he spoke of drawing a distinction between the concepts Party and organization, Comrade Axelrod, firstly, did not take account of the difference between the broad and the narrow meaning of the word organization, and, secondly, did not observe that he himself was *confusing* organized and unorganized elements.

bers, but this rather damaged than benefited the cause. We should not imitate the anarchy of the 'seventies, but avoid it." Thus "this principle," which Comrade Axelrod wanted to pass off as a Social-Democratic one, is in reality an *anarchist principle*. To refute this, one must show that control, direction and discipline *are possible* outside an organization; that conferring the title of Party members on "the elements of chaos" is *necessary*. The supporters of Comrade Martov's formulation did not show, and could not show, *either* of these things. Comrade Axelrod took as an example "a professor who regards himself as a Social-Democrat and pronounces himself such." To complete the thought contained in this example, Comrade Axelrod should have gone on to tell us whether the organized Social-Democrats regard this professor as a Social-Democrat. By failing to raise this second question, Comrade Axelrod abandoned his argument halfway. And, indeed, one thing or the other. Either the organized Social-Democrats regard the professor in question as a Social-Democrat, in which case why should they not assign him to some Social-Democratic organization? For only if the professor were thus assigned would his "pronouncement" answer to his actions, and not be empty talk (as professorial pronouncements all too frequently are). Or the organized Social-Democrats do *not* regard the professor as a Social-Democrat, in which case it would be absurd, senseless and *harmful* to allow him the right to bear the honourable and responsible title of Party member. The matter therefore reduces itself to the alternative: either the consistent application of the principle of organization, or the sanctification of disunity and anarchy. Are we to build the Party on the basis of the already formed and already welded nucleus of *Social-Democrats* which brought about the Party Congress, for instance, and which is to enlarge and multiply Party organizations of all kinds; or are we to content ourselves with the soothing *phrase* that all who help are Party members? "If we adopt Lenin's formula," Comrade Axelrod continued, "we shall throw overboard a section of those who, although they may not be directly admitted to the organization, are nevertheless Party members." The confusion of concepts of which Comrade Axelrod wanted to accuse me, here stands out quite clearly in his own case: he already takes it for granted that all who help *are* Party members, whereas that is what the whole dispute is about, and our opponents have still to *prove* the necessity and value of such an interpretation. What is the meaning of the phrase "throwing overboard," which at first glance seems so terrible? Even if only members of organizations which are recognized as Party organizations are regarded as Party members, still people who cannot "directly" join any Party organization may work in an organization which is not a Party organization but is associated with the Party. Consequently, there can be no talk of throwing anybody overboard, in the sense of preventing them from working, from taking part in the movement. On the contrary, the stronger our Party organizations consisting of *real* Social-Democrats are, and the less wavering and instability there is *within* the Party, the broader, the more

varied, the richer and more fertile will be the influence of the Party on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. After all, the Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused with the entire class. And Comrade Axelrod is guilty of just this confusion (which is characteristic of our opportunist Economism in general) when he says: "We shall first of all, of course, create an organization of the most active elements of the Party, an organization of revolutionaries; but since we are the party of a class, we must take care not to leave outside its ranks people who consciously, although perhaps not very actively, associate themselves with that party." Firstly, the active elements of the Social-Democratic Labour Party will include not only organizations of revolutionaries, but a *whole number* of workers' organizations recognized as Party organizations. Secondly, how, by what logic, does the conclusion that it is unnecessary to make any distinction between those who *belong* to the Party and those who *associate* themselves with the Party follow from the fact that we are the party of a class? Just the contrary: precisely because there are differences in degree of consciousness and degree of activity, a distinction must be made in degree of proximity to the Party. We are the Party of a class, and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, in the period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism* and "khvostism" to think that at any time under capitalism the entire class, or almost the entire class, would be able to rise to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever yet doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organizations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped strata) are unable to embrace the entire, or almost the entire working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to *raise* ever wider strata to this most advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks. And it is just such a shutting of one's eyes, it is just such forgetfulness, to obliterate the difference between those who associate and those who belong, between those who are conscious and active and those who only help.

To argue that we are the party of a class *in justification* of organizational vagueness, *in justification* of confusing organization with disorganization is to repeat the mistake of Nadezhdin, who confused "the philosophical and social-historical question of the 'depth' of the 'roots' of the movement with the technical and organizational question." It is this confusion, wrought by the deft hand of Comrade Axelrod, that was then repeated dozens of times by the speakers who defended Comrade Martov's formula-

* Manilovism—derived from Manilov, one of the characters depicted in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, characteristic of smug complacency, inertness, vapid phrasemongering.—*Ed.*

tion. "The more widespread the title of Party member, the better," said Martov, without explaining, however, what would be the advantage of a widespread *title* which did not correspond to fact. Can it be denied that control over Party members who do not belong to an organization is a mere fiction? A widespread fiction is not beneficial, but harmful. "It would only be a subject for rejoicing if every striker, every demonstrator, answering for his actions, could proclaim himself a Party member." (P. 229.) Is that so? *Every striker* should have the right *to proclaim himself a Party member?* In this statement Comrade Martov at once reduces his mistake to an absurdity, by *lowering* Social-Democracy to the level of mere strike-making, thereby repeating the misadventures of the Akimovs. It would only be a subject for rejoicing if the Social-Democrats succeeded in directing every strike, for it is their direct and unquestionable duty to direct every manifestation of the class struggle of the proletariat, and strikes are one of the most profound and most powerful manifestations of that struggle. But we would be *khvostists* if we were to *identify* this primary form of struggle, which *ipso facto* is no more than a trade unionist form, with the all-round and conscious Social-Democratic struggle. We would be opportunistically *legitimatizing a patent falsehood* if we were to allow every striker the right "to proclaim himself a Party member," for *in the majority of cases* such a "proclamation" would be an outright *falsehood.* We would be consoling ourselves with complacent daydreaming if we were to attempt to assure ourselves and others that *every striker* can *be* a Social-Democrat and a member of the Social-Democratic Party, in face of that infinite disunity, oppression and stultification which under capitalism is bound to weigh down upon such very broad strata of the "untaught," unskilled workers. It is this very example of the "*striker*" that particularly brings out the difference between the *revolutionary striving* to direct every strike in Social-Democratic fashion and the *opportunist phrasemongering* which proclaims *every* striker a Party member. We are the Party of a class inasmuch as we *in fact* direct almost the entire, or even the entire, proletarian class in Social-Democratic fashion; but only people like Akimov can conclude from this that we must *in word* identify the Party and the class.

"I am not afraid of a conspiratorial organization," said Comrade Martov in this same speech; but, he added, "for me a conspiratorial organization has meaning only when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic Labour Party." (P. 239.) He should have said to be exact: when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic labour *movement.* And in that form Comrade Martov's proposition would have been not only indisputable, but a direct truism. I dwell on this point only because subsequent speakers turned Comrade Martov's truism into the very *common and very vulgar* argument that Lenin wants "to confine the sum total of Party members to the sum total of conspirators." This conclusion, which can only provoke a smile, was drawn both by Comrade Posadovsky and by Comrade Popov, and when it was taken up by Martynov and Akimov its true character as an opportunist

phrase became perfectly clear. Today this same argument is being developed in the new *Iskra* by Comrade Axelrod in order to acquaint the reading public with the new editorial board's new views on organization. Even at the Congress, at the very first sitting where the question of § 1 was discussed, I remarked that our opponents wanted to employ this cheap weapon, and therefore issued the warning in my speech (p. 240): "It should not be thought that Party organizations must consist solely of professional revolutionaries. We need the most diversified organizations of every type, rank and shade, from extremely narrow and secret organizations to very broad, free, *lose Organisationen*." This is such an apparent and self-evident truth that I considered it unnecessary to dwell upon it....

I had already pointed this out in *What Is To Be Done?*—and in "A Letter to a Comrade" I developed this idea in greater detail. The factory circles, I wrote there, "are particularly important to us: after all, the main strength of the movement lies in the state of organization of the workers in the *large* mills, for the large mills (and factories) contain the predominant part of the working class, not only as to numbers but even more as to influence, development and fighting capacity. Every factory must be our fortress.... The factory sub-committee should endeavour to embrace the whole factory, the largest possible number of the workers, by a network of all kinds of circles (or agents).... All groups, circles, sub-committees, etc., should enjoy the status of committee institutions, or branches of a committee. Some of them will openly proclaim their wish to join the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and, *if endorsed* by the committee, will join the Party, will take upon themselves definite functions (on the instructions of, or in agreement with, the committee), will undertake to obey the orders of the Party organs, *will receive the same rights as all Party members*, will be regarded as immediate candidates for election to the committee, etc. Others *will not join* the R.S.D.L.P. and will have the status of circles formed by Party members or associated with one or other Party group, etc." (Pp. 17-18.) The words I have underscored make it particularly clear that the *idea* of my formulation of §1 was already fully expressed in "A Letter to a Comrade." There the conditions for joining the Party are plainly indicated, namely: 1) a certain degree of organization, and 2) the endorsement of a Party committee. A page later I roughly indicate also what groups and organizations should (or should not) be admitted to the Party, and for what reasons: "Groups of literature distributors should belong to the R.S.D.L.P. and know a certain number of its members and functionaries. A group for the study of labour conditions and for the drawing up of trade union demands need not necessarily belong to the R.S.D.L.P. A group of students, officers or office employees engaged in self-education *in conjunction with* one or two Party members should in some cases not even be aware that these belong to the Party, etc." (Pp. 18-19.)

Depending on degree of organization in general and degree of secrecy of organization in particular, roughly the following categories may be distin-

guished: 1) organizations of revolutionaries; 2) organizations of workers of the broadest and most varied kind (I confine myself to the working class, taking it as self-evident that certain elements of other classes will also be included here under certain conditions). These two categories constitute the Party. Further, 3) organizations of workers which are associated with the Party; 4) organizations of workers which are not associated with the Party but actually submit to its control and direction; 5) unorganized elements of the working class who also come partly under the direction of the Social-Democratic Party, at any rate during the big manifestations of the class struggle. That, approximately, is how the matter presents itself to me. From the point of view of Comrade Martov, on the contrary, the border line of the Party remains absolutely vague, for "every striker" may "proclaim himself a Party member." What is the use of this vagueness? A widespread "title." Its harm is that it introduces a *disorganizing* idea, the confusing of class and Party.

In illustration of the general propositions we have adduced, let us take a cursory glance at the subsequent discussion of § 1 at the Congress. Comrade Brouckère (to the satisfaction of Comrade Martov) pronounced himself in favour of my formulation, but *his* alliance with me, it appears, in contradistinction to Comrade Akimov's alliance with Martov, was based on a misunderstanding. Comrade Brouckère did "not agree with the Rules as a whole, nor with their entire spirit" (p. 239) and defended my formulation *as the basis of the democracy* which the supporters of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* desire. Comrade Brouckère had not yet risen to the view that in a political struggle it is sometimes necessary to choose the *lesser evil*; Comrade Brouckère did not realize that it was useless to advocate democracy at a Congress like ours. Comrade Akimov was more perspicacious. He put the question quite rightly when he admitted that "Comrade Martov and Lenin are arguing as to which [formulation] would best achieve their common aim" (p. 252). "Brouckère and I," he continued, "want to choose the one *which will least achieve that aim*. From this angle I choose Martov's formulation." And Comrade Akimov frankly explained that he considered "their very aim" (that is, the aim of Plekhanov, Martov and myself, namely, the creation of a directing organization of revolutionaries) "impracticable and harmful"; like Comrade Martynov,* he advocated the idea of the Economists that "an organization of revolutionaries" was unnecessary. He

* Comrade Martynov, however, was anxious to draw a distinction between himself and Comrade Akimov; he was anxious to show that conspiratorial does not mean secret, that behind the two different words were concealed two different concepts. What the difference is, was explained neither by Comrade Martynov nor by Comrade Axelrod, who is now following in his footsteps. Comrade Martynov tried to "make out" that I had not—for example in *What Is To Be Done?* (as well as in the *Tasks*) —resolutely declared my opposition to "*confining* the political struggle to conspiracies." Comrade Martynov was anxious to have his hearers *forget* that the people I was combating *did not see* any necessity for an *organization of revolutionaries*, just as Comrade Akimov does not see it now.

was "imbued with the belief that in the end the realities of life will force their way into our Party organization, irrespective of whether you bar their path with Martov's formulation or with Lenin's." It would not be worth while dwelling on this "*khvostist*" conception of the "realities of life" if we did not encounter it in the case of Comrade Martov too. In general, Comrade Martov's second speech (p. 245) is so interesting as to be worth examining in detail.

Comrade Martov's first argument: control by the Party organizations over Party members not belonging to them "is practicable, inasmuch as, having assigned a function to somebody, the committee will be able to watch it" (p. 245). This thesis is remarkably characteristic, for it "betrays," if one may say so, *who* needs Martov's formulation and who will find it of service *in fact*—whether freelance intellectuals or workers' groups and the worker masses. The fact is that two interpretations of Martov's formulation are possible: 1) that anyone who renders the Party regular personal assistance under the guidance of one of its organizations is entitled "*to proclaim himself*" (Comrade Martov's own words) a Party member; 2) that every Party organization is *entitled to regard* anyone as a Party member who renders it regular personal assistance under its direction. It is only the first interpretation that really gives "every striker" the opportunity to call himself a Party member, and therefore *it alone* immediately won the hearts of the Liebers, Akimovs and Martynovs. But it is obvious that this interpretation is but an empty phrase, because it would fit the entire working class, and the difference between Party and class would be obliterated; control over and direction of "every striker" can only be spoken of "symbolically." That is why, in his second speech, Comrade Martov at once slipped into the second interpretation (even though, be it said in parenthesis, it was *directly rejected by the Congress* when it turned down Kostich's resolution—p. 255), namely, that a committee would assign functions and watch the way they were carried out. Of course, no such special assignments would ever be made to the *mass* of the workers, to the *thousands* of proletarians (of whom Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martynov spoke) —they would frequently be given to those *professors* whom Comrade Axelrod mentioned, to those *high school students* about whom Comrade Lieber and Comrade Popov were so concerned (p. 241), and to the *revolutionary youth* to whom Comrade Axelrod referred in his second speech (p. 242). In a word, Comrade Martov's formula would either remain a dead letter, an empty phrase, or it would be of benefit mainly and almost exclusively to the "*intellectuals who are thoroughly imbued with bourgeois individualism*" and who do not wish to join the organization. Martov's formulation *ostensibly* defends the interests of the broad strata of the proletariat, but *in fact*, it serves the interests of the *bourgeois intellectuals*, who fight shy of proletarian discipline and organization. No one will undertake to deny that it is *precisely its individualism* and incapacity for discipline and organization that in general distinguishes *the intelligentsia as a separate stra-*

tum of modern capitalist society (see, for example, Kautsky's well-known articles on the intelligentsia). This, incidentally, is a feature which unfavourably distinguishes this social stratum from the proletariat; it is one of the reasons for the flabbiness and instability of the intellectual, from which the proletariat is so often made to suffer; and this characteristic of the intellectual is intimately bound up with his customary mode of life, his mode of earning a livelihood, which in a great many respects approximates to the *petty-bourgeois mode of existence* (working in isolation or in very small groups, etc.). Lastly, it is not fortuitous that the defenders of Comrade Martov's formulation were obliged to cite the example of professors and high school students! It was not the champions of a broad proletarian struggle who, in the controversy over § 1, took the field against the champions of a radically conspiratorial organization as Comrades Martynov and Axelrod thought, but the supporters of *bourgeois-intellectual individualism*, who came into conflict with the supporters of *proletarian organization and discipline.*

Comrade Popov said: "Everywhere, in St. Petersburg as in Nikolayev or Odessa, as the representatives from these towns testify, there are dozens of workers who are distributing literature and carrying on word-of-mouth agitation but who cannot be members of an organization. They may be assigned to an organization, but they cannot be regarded as members." (P. 241.) Why they cannot be members of an organization Comrade Popov did not divulge. I have already quoted the passage from "A Letter to a Comrade" showing that the admission of all such workers (by the hundred, not the dozen) to an organization is possible and essential, and, moreover, that a great many of these organizations can and should belong to the Party.

Comrade Martov's second argument: "In Lenin's opinion there should be no organizations in the Party other than Party organizations. . . ." Quite true! . . . "In my opinion, on the contrary, such organizations should exist. Life creates and breeds organizations quicker than we can include them in the hierarchy of our militant organization of professional revolutionaries. . . ." That is untrue in two respects: 1) The number of effective organizations of revolutionaries that "life" breeds is far less than we need and the working-class movement requires; 2) our Party should be a hierarchy not only of organizations of revolutionaries, but of a large number of workers' organizations as well. . . . "Lenin thinks that the Central Committee will confer the title of Party organization only on such as are fully reliable in the matter of principles. But Comrade Brouckère understands very well that life [*sic!*] will claim its own and that the Central Committee, in order not to leave a multiplicity of organizations outside the Party, will have to legitimatize them despite their utterly unreliable character; that is why Comrade Brouckère associates himself with Lenin. . . ." Of course, if the Central Committee *had absolutely* to consist of people who were not guided by their own opinions but by what others might say, then "life" would "claim its own" in the sense that the most backward elements

of the Party would gain the upper hand. But no *intelligent* reason can be cited which would induce a *sensible* Central Committee to admit "unreliable" elements to the Party. By this very reference to "life," which "breeds" unreliable elements, Comrade Martov patently revealed the opportunist character of his plan of organization!... "But I think," he continued, "that if such an organization (one that is not quite reliable) is prepared to accept the Party program and Party control, we may admit it to the Party without thereby making it a Party organization. I would consider it a great triumph for our Party, if, for example, some union of 'independents' were to declare that they accept the views of Social-Democracy and its program and wanted to join the Party; which does not mean, however, that we would include the union in a Party organization...." Such is the muddle Martov's formulation leads to: a non-Party organization belonging to the Party! Only picture *his* scheme: the Party=1) an organization of revolutionaries,+2) organizations of workers recognized as Party organizations, +3) organizations of workers not recognized as Party organizations (consisting principally of "independents"), +4) individuals performing various functions—professors, students, etc., +5) "every striker." Alongside of this remarkable plan one can only put the words of Comrade Lieber: "Our task is not only to organize an organization [!!]; we can and should organize a party." (P. 241.) Yes, of course, we can and should do this, but what it requires is not meaningless words about "organizing organizations," but the *plain demand* that Party members should work to create an *organization* in fact. He who talks about "organizing a party" and yet defends the use of the word party to screen disorganization and disunity of every kind is just indulging in empty jabber.

"Our formulation," Comrade Martov said, "expresses the desire to have a series of organizations standing between the organization of revolutionaries and the masses." It does not. Martov's formulation does *not express* this truly essential desire, for it *does not offer a stimulus to organization*, does not contain a demand for organization, and does not separate the organized from the unorganized. All it offers is a *title*, and in this connection we cannot but recall Comrade Axelrod's words: "no decree can forbid them" (circles of revolutionary youth and the like) "and individuals to call themselves Social-Democrats" (a sacred truth!) "and even to regard themselves as part of the Party...." There he is *absolutely wrong*! You cannot, and there is *no need*, to forbid anyone to call himself a Social-Democrat, for in its *direct* sense this word only signifies a system of convictions, and not definite organizational relations. As to forbidding individual circles and persons "to regard themselves as part of the Party," that can and should be done when such circles and persons injure the Party, corrupt it and disorganize it. It would be absurd to speak of the *Party* as a whole, as a political magnitude, if it could not "forbid by decree" a circle to "regard itself as part" of the whole! What otherwise would be the point of defining the procedure and conditions of expulsion from the

Party? Comrade Axelrod reduced Comrade Martov's fundamental mistake to an obvious absurdity; he even elevated this mistake to an *opportunist theory* when he added: "In Lenin's formulation, § 1 is a direct contradiction in principle to the very nature [!!] and aims of the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat" (p. 243). This means no more and no less than that to make higher demands of the Party than of the class is contradictory in principle to the very nature of the aims of the proletariat. It is not surprising that Akimov was heart and soul in favour of such a *theory*.

It should be said in fairness that Comrade Axelrod, who *now* desires to convert this mistaken formulation, one obviously tending towards opportunism, into the germ of *new* views, at the Congress, on the contrary expressed a readiness to "bargain," by saying: "But I observe that I am hammering at an open door, because Comrade Lenin, with his peripheral circles which are to be regarded as part of the Party organization, goes out to meet my demand. . . ." (And not only with the peripheral circles, but with every kind of workers' union: *cf.* p. 242 of the Minutes, the speech of Comrade Strakhov, and the passages from "A Letter to a Comrade" quoted above.) "There still remain the individuals, but here, too, we could bargain." I replied to Comrade Axelrod that, generally speaking, I was not averse to bargaining, and I must now explain in what sense this was meant. As regards the individuals—all those professors, high school students, etc.—I should be inclined least of all to make concessions; but if doubts were raised about the workers' organizations, I would have agreed (despite the utter lack of foundation for such doubts, as I have shown above) to add to my § 1 a note to the following effect: "As large a number as possible of workers' organizations which accept the Program and Rules of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party should be included among the Party organizations." Strictly speaking, of course, the place for such a wish is not in the Rules, which should be confined to legal definitions, but in explanatory commentaries and pamphlets (and I have already stated that I gave such explanations in my pamphlets long before the Rules were drawn up); but, at least, such a note would not contain even a shadow of a *wrong* idea capable of leading to disorganization, not a shadow of the *opportunist* arguments* and *"anarchist conceptions"* that are undoubtedly to be found in Comrade Martov's formulation.

* To this category of arguments, which inevitably arise when attempts are made to justify Martov's formulation, belongs, in particular, Trotsky's statement (pp. 248 and 346) that "opportunism is created by more complex (or: is determined by more profound) causes than a clause in the Rules; it is brought about by the relative level of development of the bourgeois democracy and the proletariat. . . ." The point is not that clauses in the Rules may give rise to opportunism; the point is to forge with the help of the Rules a more or less trenchant weapon against opportunism. The profounder its causes, the more trenchant should this weapon be. Therefore, to *justify* a formulation which opens the door to opportunism by the fact that opportunism has "profound causes" is *khvostism* of the purest water. When Trotsky was opposed to Comrade Lieber, he understood that the Rules constituted the "organized distrust" of the whole towards the part, of the vanguard towards the backward detachment;

The latter expression, given by me in quotation marks, belongs to Comrade Pavlovich, who quite justly characterized as *anarchism* the recognition of "*irresponsible* and *self-styled* Party members." "Translated into simple language," said Comrade Pavlovich, explaining my formulation to Comrade Lieber, it means that "if you want to be a Party member you must recognize organizational relations, too, not only platonically." With no less justice, Comrade Pavlovich pointed to the contradiction between Comrade Martov's formulation and the indisputable precept of scientific Socialism which Comrade Martov quoted so unhappily: "Our Party is the conscious spokesman of an unconscious process." Exactly so. And for this very reason it is wrong to want "every striker" to have the right to call himself a Party member, for if "every strike" were not only a spontaneous expression of a powerful class instinct and of the class struggle, which is inevitably leading to the social revolution, but a *conscious expression* of that process, then ... the general strike would not be anarchist phrasemongering, then our Party would forthwith and at once *embrace* the whole working class, and, consequently, would at once put an end to the *entire bourgeois society*. If it is to be a conscious spokesman *in fact*, the Party must be able to work out such organizational relations as will *ensure a definite level* of consciousness, and systematically raise this level. "If we go the way of Mar-

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but when Trotsky found himself on Comrade Lieber's side, he forgot this and even began to justify the *weakness* and instability of our organization of this distrust (distrust of opportunism) by talking about "complex causes," the "level of development of the proletariat," etc. Here is another of Trotsky's arguments: "It is much easier for the intellectual youth, organized in one way or another, to *enter themselves* [my italics] *on the rolls of the Party.*" *Just so. That is why it is the formulation by* which even unorganized elements may *proclaim themselves* Party members that suffers from the vagueness typical of the intellectual, and not my formulation which *removes* the right to "enter *oneself*" on the rolls. Trotsky says that if the Central Committee were "not to recognize" an organization of opportunists it would only be because *of the character of certain persons, and that once these persons were known as* political individuals they would not be dangerous and could be removed by a general Party boycott. This is only true of cases when people have to be *removed from the Party* (and only half true at that, because an organized party *removes* members by a vote and not by a boycott). It is absolutely untrue of the far more frequent cases when *removal* would be absurd, and when all that is required is *control*. For purposes of control, the Central Committee might, on certain conditions, *deliberately* admit to the Party an organization which was not quite reliable but which was capable of working; it might do so with the object of testing it, of trying to *direct it into the true path*, of correcting its partial aberrations by its own guidance, etc. This would not be dangerous *if* in general "*self-entering*" on the Party rolls were not allowed. It would often be useful for an open and *responsible*, controlled expression (and discussion) of mistaken views and mistaken tactics. "But if legal definitions are to correspond to actual relations, Comrade Lenin's formulation must be rejected," said Trotsky, and again he spoke like an opportunist. Actual relations are not a dead thing, they live and develop. Legal definitions may correspond to the progressive development of these relations, but they may also (if these definitions are bad ones) "correspond" to retrogression or stagnation. The latter is the "case" with Comrade Martov.

tov," Comrade Pavlovich said, "we must first of all delete the clause on accepting the *program,* for before a program can be accepted it must be mastered and understood.... Acceptance of the program presupposes a fairly high level of political consciousness." We will never consent to have *support* of Social-Democracy, *participation* in the struggle it is directing, artificially *restricted* by any demand (mastery, understanding, and the rest), for this *participation* itself, its very manifestation, *promotes* both consciousness and the instinct for organization; but inasmuch as we have *joined together in a party* in order to carry on systematic work, we must see to it that it is systematic.

That Comrade Pavlovich's warning regarding the program was not superfluous became apparent *at once,* in the course of *that very same* sitting. Comrades Akimov and Lieber, who got Comrade Martov's formulation carried,* *at once* betrayed their true nature by demanding (pp. 254-55) that as regards the program too all that was required (for "membership" in the Party) was platonic recognition, recognition only of its "basic principles." "Comrade Akimov's motion is quite logical from Comrade Martov's standpoint," Comrade Pavlovich remarked.

* * *

The grouping of votes over paragraph one of the Rules revealed a phenomenon of exactly the same type as the equality of languages episode: the falling away of one-quarter (approximately) of the *Iskra*-ite majority made possible the victory of the anti-*Iskra*-ites, who were backed by the "Centre"....

[Chapters *J*, *K*, *L* and *M* have been omitted in the present edition since they deal almost exclusively with a description of the petty controversies over details of the rules or controversies over the personal composition of the central party institutions. Neither the one nor the other are of interest to the contemporary reader or important in elucidating the differences between the "minority" and the "majority." We give only the latter part of Chapter *M* which refers to a question of tactics touched on as far back as the Second Party Congress.]

An interesting, but, unfortunately, all too brief controversy in which a question was discussed on its merits arose in connection with Starovyer's resolution on the liberals. As one may judge from the signatures to it (pp. 357 and 358), it was adopted by the Congress because three of the supporters of the "majority" (Braun, Orlov and Ossipov) voted both *for it* and for Plekhanov's resolution, not perceiving the irreconcilable contradiction between the two. The irreconcilable contradiction is not apparent at a first glance, because Plekhanov's resolution lays down a general principle,

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* The vote was 28 for and 22 against. Of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites, seven were for Martov and one for me. Without the aid of the opportunists, Comrade Martov would not have carried through his opportunist formulation.

outlines a definite attitude as regards both principles and tactics towards *bourgeois liberalism in Russia*, whereas Starovyer's attempts to define the *concrete conditions in which "temporary agreements" would be permissible* with "liberal or liberal-democratic trends." The subjects of the two resolutions are different. But Starovyer's suffers from *political vagueness*, and is consequently petty and shallow. It *does not define the class meaning of Russian liberalism*, it does not indicate the *definite* political trends in which it is expressed, it does not tell the proletariat what should be the *major* tasks of the latter's propaganda and agitation in relation to these definite trends, it confuses (owing to its vagueness) such different things as the student movement and *Osvobozhdeniye*,* it is too shallow, casuistically prescribing *three* concrete conditions under which "temporary agreements" would be permissible. Here, as in many other cases, *political vagueness* leads to casuistry. The absence of any general principle and the attempt to enumerate "conditions" result in a shallow and, strictly speaking, *incorrect* formulation of these conditions. Just examine Starovyer's three conditions: 1) "the liberal or liberal-democratic trends" must "clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocratic government they will resolutely side with the Russian Social-Democrats." What is the difference between the liberal and liberal-democratic trends? The resolution furnishes no material for a reply to this question. Is it not that the liberal trends voice the position of the politically least progressive sections of the bourgeoisie, while the liberal-democratic trends voice the position of the more progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and of the petty bourgeoisie? If that is so, can Comrade Starovyer possibly think that the sections of the bourgeoisie which are least progressive (but nevertheless progressive, for otherwise they could not be called liberal at all) can "resolutely side with the Social-Democrats"? That is absurd, and even if the spokesmen of such a trend were to *"declare so clearly and unambiguously"* (an absolutely impossible assumption), we, the party of the proletariat, *would be obliged not to believe* them. Being a liberal and resolutely siding with the Social-Democrats are two mutually exclusive things.

Further, let us assume a case where the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocracy they resolutely side with the *Socialist-Revolutionaries*. Such an assumption is far less unlikely than Comrade Starovyer's (owing to the bourgeois-democratic nature of the Socialist-Revolutionary trend). It follows from the meaning of his resolution, because of its vagueness and casuistry, that *in a case like this temporary agreements* with such liberals would be *impermissible*. Yet this inevitable deduction from Comrade Starovyer's resolution would lead to a *downright false* conclusion. Temporary

* *Osvobozhdeniye*—a bourgeois liberal group organized in 1902 which served as the nucleus of the subsequent major bourgeois party in Russia—the Constitutional Democrats. It published a magazine abroad under the same title, founded and edited by Struve, which was illegally distributed in Russia.—*Ed.*

agreements are permissible with the Socialist-Revolutionaries (see the resolution of the Congress on the latter), and, *consequently*, with liberals who side with the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Second condition: if these trends "do not put forward in their programs demands running counter to the interests of the working class or the democracy in general, or demands which obscure their minds." Here we have the same mistake again: there never have been, nor can there be, liberal-democratic trends which did not put forward in their programs demands that run counter to the interests of the working class and obscure their (the proletarians') minds. Even one of the most democratic sections of our liberal-democratic trend, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, put forward in their program—a muddled program, like all liberal programs—demands that run counter to the interests of the working class and obscure their minds. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that it is *essential* "to expose the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement," but not that temporary agreements are impermissible.

Lastly, in the general form in which it is presented, Comrade Starovyer's third "condition" (that the liberal-democrats should make universal, equal, secret and direct suffrage the slogan of their struggle) is *wrong*: it *would be unwise* to declare impermissible in all cases temporary and partial agreements with liberal-democratic trends which put forward as their slogan the demand for a constitution with a qualified suffrage, for a "curtailed" constitution generally. As a matter of fact, this is just the category to which the *Osvobozhdeniye* "trend" belongs, but it would be political short-sightedness incompatible with the principles of Marxism to tie one's hands in advance by forbidding "temporary agreements" even with the most timorous liberals.

To sum up: Comrade Starovyer's resolution, to which Comrades Martov and Axelrod subscribed their signatures, is a *mistake*, and the Third Congress would be wise to rescind it. It suffers from the *political vagueness* of its theoretical and tactical position, from the casuistry of the practical "conditions" it stipulates. It *confuses two questions:* 1) the exposure of the "anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian" features of *all* liberal-democratic trends and the necessity to *combat* these features, and 2) the *conditions* for temporary and partial *agreements* with any of these trends. It does not give what it should (an analysis of the class meaning of liberalism), and gives what it should not (a prescription of "conditions"). It is absurd in general to draw up detailed "conditions" for temporary agreements at a Party congress, when even the direct partner, the other party to such possible agreements, is unknown; and even if the other party were known, it would be a hundred times more rational to leave the definition of the "conditions" for a temporary agreement to the central institutions of the Party, as the Congress did in relation to the Socialist-Revolutionary "trend" (see Plekhanov's amendment to the end of Comrade Axelrod's resolution—Minutes, pp. 362 and 15).

As to the objections of the "minority" to Plekhanov's resolution, Comrade Martov's only argument was: Plekhanov's resolution "ends with the paltry conclusion that a certain writer should be exposed. *Would this not* be using a sledgehammer to kill a fly?" (P. 358.) This argument, whose emptiness is concealed by a smart phrase—"paltry conclusion"—is another specimen of pompous phrasemongering. Firstly, Plekhanov's resolution speaks of "exposing in the eyes of the proletariat the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement wherever such limitations and inadequacy manifest themselves." Hence Comrade Martov's assertion (at the League Congress; Minutes, p. 88) that "all attention is to be directed only to Struve, only to one liberal" is the sheerest nonsense. Secondly, to compare Mr. Struve to a "fly" when the possibility of temporary agreements with the Russian liberals is in question, is to sacrifice an elementary political truth for a smart phrase. No, Mr. Struve is not a fly, but a political magnitude; and it is not because he personally is such a big figure that he is a political magnitude, but because of his position as the sole representative of Russian liberalism—of liberalism that is at all effectual and organized—in the illegal world. Therefore, whoever talks of the Russian liberals and of what should be the attitude of our Party towards them, and loses sight of Mr. Struve *and of Osvobozhdeniye, is* just talking for the sake of talking. Or perhaps Comrade Martov will be good enough to point to *even one single* "liberal or liberal-democratic trend" in Russia which could be even remotely compared today with the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend? It would be interesting to see him try!

"Struve's name means nothing to the workers," said Comrade Kostrov, supporting Comrade Martov. I hope Comrade Kostrov and Comrade Martov will not be offended—but that argument is fully in the style of Akimov. It is like the argument about the proletariat in the genitive case.*.

To which workers does "Struve's name mean nothing" (like the name of *Osvobozhdeniye,* mentioned in Comrade Plekhanov's resolution alongside of Mr. Struve)? To those who are very little acquainted, or not at all acquainted, with the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" in Russia. One asks, what should have been the attitude of our Party Congress to such workers: should it have instructed Party members to acquaint these workers with the only definite liberal trend in Russia; or *should it* have *refrained from mentioning* names with which the workers are little acquainted only because they are little acquainted with politics? If Comrade Kostrov, having taken one step in the wake of Comrade Akimov, does not want to take

* During the discussion of the Party program at the Congress, the "Economist" Akimov (V. Makhnovets) declared that one of the defects of the *Iskra's* draft program, *a defect which showed that its authors had forgotten the interests of the* proletariat, was that it nowhere mentioned the word "proletariat" in the nominative case, as a subject, but only in the genitive case, in combination with the word "party" ("party of the proletariat"). This statement was greeted by a general outburst of laughter.—*Ed.*

another step, he will answer this question in the former sense. And having answered it in the former sense, he will see how groundless his argument was. *At any rate*, the words "Struve" and "*Osvobozhdeniye*" in Plekhanov's resolution *are likely to mean* much more to the workers than the words "liberal and liberal-democratic trend" in Starovyer's resolution.

Today the Russian worker cannot obtain a practical acquintance with the political trends in our liberal movement that are at all frank, except through *Osvobozhdeniye*. The legal liberal literature is unsuitable for this purpose because it is so nebulous. And we must as assiduously as possible (and among the broadest possible masses of workers) direct the weapon of our criticism against the followers of *Osvobozhdeniye*, so that when the future revolution breaks out, the Russian proletariat may, with the real criticism of weapons, paralyse the inevitable attempts of the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry to curtail the democratic character of the revolution.

N. GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS. THE REVOLUTIONARY AND OPPORTUNIST WINGS OF THE PARTY

We must now sum up, so that we may, on the basis of the *entire* Congress material, answer the following question: what elements, groups and shades went to make up the final majority and minority which were destined for a time to become the main division in the Party? We must sum up all the material relating to the shades of opinion on matters of principle, theory and tactics which the minutes of the Congress provide in such abundance. Without a general "summary," without a general picture of the Congress as a whole, and of all the principal groupings during the voting, this material is too disjointed, too disconnected, so that at first sight some groupings seem to be casual, especially to one who does not take the trouble to make an independent and comprehensive *study* of the minutes of the Congress (and how many readers have taken that trouble?).

In English parliamentary reports we often meet the characteristic word "division." The House "divided" into such and such a majority and minority—it is said when an issue is voted. The "division" of our Social-Democratic House on the various issues discussed at the Congress presents a picture of the struggle inside the Party, of its shades of opinions and groups, that *for its completeness and accuracy is unique and invaluable*. To make the picture more graphic, to obtain a real *picture* instead of a heap of disconnected, disjointed and isolated facts and incidents, to put a stop to the endless and senseless controversies over separate divisions (who voted for whom and who supported whom?), I have decided to try to depict *all the basic* types of "divisions" at our Congress in the form of a *diagram*. This will probably seem strange to a great many people, but I doubt whether any other method can be found that would really generalize and summa-

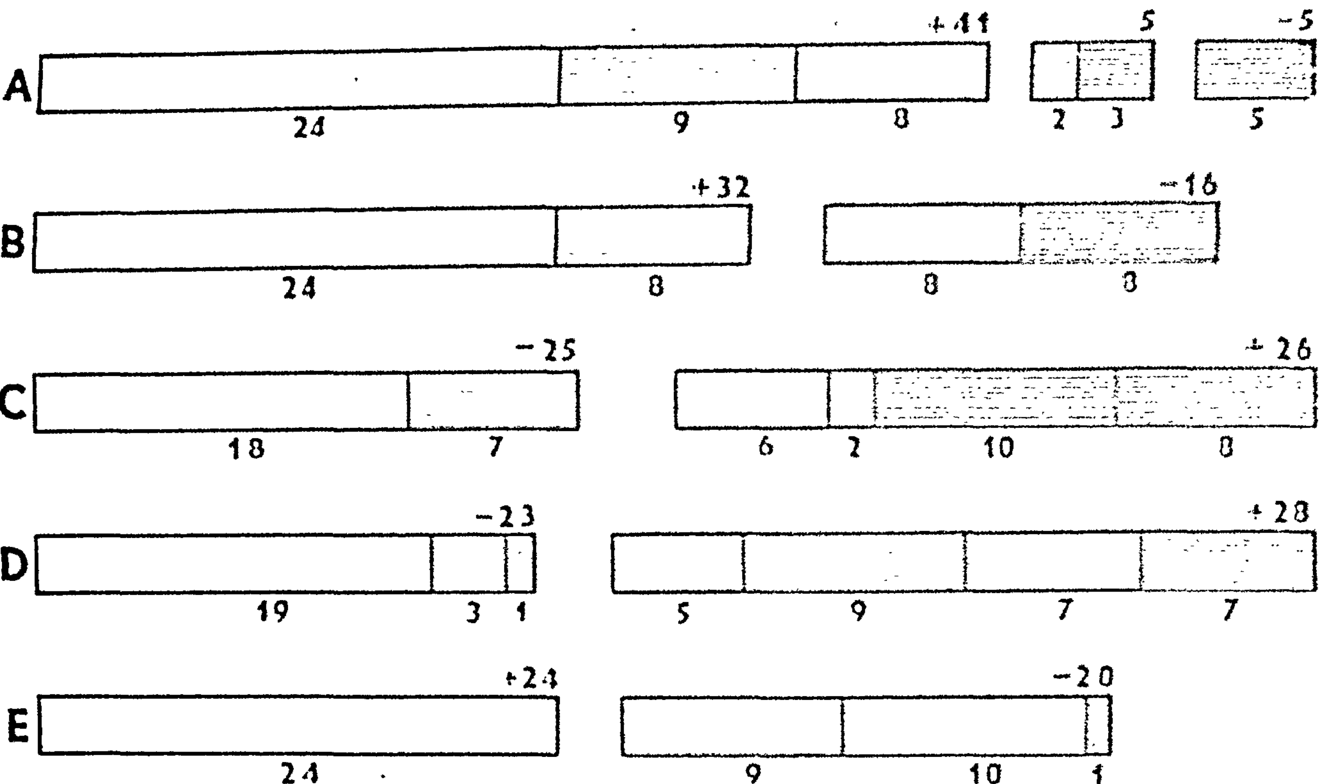
rize the results in the most complete and accurate manner possible. Whether a particular delegate voted for or against a given motion can be determined with absolute accuracy in cases when a roll-call vote was taken; and in certain important cases, even when no roll-call vote was taken, it can be determined from the minutes with a very high degree of probability, with a sufficient degree of approximation to the truth. If we take into account *all* the roll-call votes and all the other votes on issues of any importance (as judged, for example, by the thoroughness and warmth of the debates), we shall obtain a picture of the struggle within our Party that will be as objective as the material at our disposal permits. In doing so, instead of trying to give a photograph, *i.e.*, an image of each vote separately, we shall try to give a picture, *i.e.*, to present all the main *types* of voting, ignoring relatively unimportant exceptions and variations which would only confuse matters. In any case, anybody will be able with the aid of the minutes to check every detail of our picture, to supplement it with any particular vote he likes, in a word, to criticize it not only by arguments, doubts and references to isolated cases, but by drawing a *different picture* on the basis of the same material.

In marking on the diagram every delegate who took part in the voting, we shall indicate by special shading the four main groups which we have traced in detail throughout the course of the debates at the Congress, *viz.*, 1) the *Iskra*-ites of the majority; 2) the *Iskra*-ites of the minority; 3) the "Centre," and 4) the anti-*Iskra*-ites. We have seen the difference in shades of principle between these groups in a *host of instances*, and if anyone does not like the *names* of the groups, which remind lovers of zigzags too much of the *Iskra* organization and the *Iskra* trend, let us remark that it is not the name that matters. Now that we have traced the shades through *all* the debates at the Congress it is easy to substitute for the already established and familiar Party appellations (which jar on the ears of some) a description of the *essence of the differences between the groups*. Were this substitution made, we would obtain the following names for these same four groups: 1) consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats; 2) minor opportunists; 3) middling opportunists; and 4) major opportunists (major according to our Russian standards).

We shall now proceed to give a detailed explanation of the types of vote which have been "snapped" on this diagram (see diagram: General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress).

The first type of vote (A) covers cases when the "Centre" joined with the *Iskra*-ites against the anti-*Iskra*-ites or a part of them. It includes the vote on the program as a whole (Comrade Akimov alone abstained, all the others voted for); the vote on the resolution condemning federation in principle (all voted for, except the five Bundists); the vote on § 2 of the Bund rules (the five Bundists voted against us; five abstained, *viz*: Martynov, Akimov, Brouckère and Makhov, the latter with two votes, the rest were with us); *it is this vote that is represented in diagram* A. Further,

GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS



THE PLUS AND MINUS SIGNS INDICATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST FOR AND AGAINST ON A PARTICULAR ISSUE. THE FIGURES BELOW THE STRIPS INDICATE THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST BY EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS. THE CHARACTER OF THE DIVISIONS COVERED BY EACH OF THE TYPES A TO E IS EXPLAINED IN THE TEXT.

Name of group.

- ISKRA-ITES OF THE MAJORITY
- ISKRA-ITES OF THE MINORITY
- CENTRE
- ANTI-ISKRA-ITES

the *three* votes on the question of endorsing the *Iskra* as the central organ of the Party were also of this type: the editors (five votes) abstained; in all the three divisions two voted against (Akimov and Brouckère) and, in addition, when the vote on the *motives* for endorsing the *Iskra* was taken, the five Bundists and Comrade Martynov abstained.*

This type of vote provides an answer to a very interesting and important question, namely, when did the Congress "Centre" vote with the *Iskra*-ites? Either when *the anti-"Iskra"-ites, too, were with us,* with a few exceptions (adoption of the program, or endorsement of the *Iskra* without the motives stated), or else when it involved the sort of *statement* which was not in itself a direct committal to a definite political position (recognition of the organizing work of the *Iskra* was not in itself a committal to carry out its organizational policy in relation to particular groups; rejection of the principle of federation did not preclude abstention from voting on a specific scheme of federation, as we have seen in the case of Comrade Makhov). We have already seen, when speaking of the significance of the groupings at the Congress in general, how falsely this matter is put in the official account of the official *Iskra*, which (through the mouth of Comrade Martov) *slurs and glosses over* the difference between the *Iskra*-ites and the "Centre," between the consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats and the opportunists, by citing *cases when the anti-"Iskra"-ites, too, sided with us!* Even the most "Right-wing" of the opportunists in the German and French Social-Democratic parties never vote against such points as the *adoption of the program as a whole.*

The second type of division (B) covers the cases when the *Iskra*-ites, consistent and inconsistent, voted together against all the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the entire "Centre." These were mostly cases that involved giving effect to definite and specific plans of the *Iskra* policy, of endorsing the *Iskra in fact and not only in word.* They include the *Organization Committee episode*;** the question whether the position of the Bund in the Party should be the first item on the agenda; the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*

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* Why was the vote on § 2 of the Bund rules taken as an illustration in the diagram? Because the votes on the question of endorsing the *Iskra* were less complete, while the votes on the program and on the question of federation refer to political decisions of a less clearly defined character. Speaking generally, the choice of any other one of a number of votes *of the same type* will not in the least affect the main features of the picture, as anyone may easily see by making the corresponding changes.

** It is this vote that is depicted in Diagram B: the *Iskra*-ites secured thirty-two votes; the Bundist resolution sixteen. It should be pointed out that *not one* of the votes of this type was *by roll-call.* The way the individual delegates voted can only be established—although to a very high degree of probability—by two sets of evidence: 1) in the debate the speakers of both groups of *Iskra*-ites spoke in favour, those of the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the Centre against; 2) the number of votes cast *in favour* was always very close to thirty-three. Nor should it be forgotten that when analysing the debates at the Congress we pointed out, quite apart from the voting, *a number* of cases when the "Centre" sided with the anti-*Iskra*-ites (the opportunists) *against* us. Some of these issues were: the absolute value of democratic demands, whether we should support the opposition elements, restriction of centralism, etc.

group; the two votes on the agrarian program, and, sixthly and lastly, the vote *against* the Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats (*Rabocheye Dyelo*), that is, the recognition of the League as the only Party organization abroad. In cases like these the old, pre-Party, circle spirit, the interests of the opportunist organizations or groups, the narrow conception of Marxism, were at issue with the strictly consistent principles of the policy of revolutionary Social-Democracy, the *Iskra*-ites of the minority still sided with us in a number of cases, in a number of exceedingly important votes (important from the standpoint of the Organization Committee, *Yuzhny Rabochy* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*)... until *their own* circle spirit and their own inconsistencies came on the carpet. The "divisions" of this type make it quite clear that on a number of issues involving the practical application of our principles, *the Centre joined forces with the anti-"Iskra"-ites*, displaying a much greater kinship with them than with us, a greater inclination *in practice* towards the *opportunist* than towards the *revolutionary* wing of Social-Democracy. Those who were *Iskra*-ites *in name* but were ashamed *to be Iskra*-ites revealed their true nature; and the struggle that inevitably ensued caused no little irritation which obscured from the least thoughtful and most impressionable the significance of the shades of principle revealed in the course of the struggle. But now that the ardour of battle has somewhat abated and the minutes remain as an unbiased extract of a series of heated battles, only those who will not see can fail to perceive that the alliance of the Makhovs and Egorovs with the Akimovs and Liebers was not, and could not be, casual.

The distinguishing feature of the third type of vote at the Congress, represented by the three remaining parts of the diagram (C, D and E), is that *a small section of the "Iskra"-ites broke away and went over to the anti-"Iskra"-ites*, who accordingly gained the victory (as long as they remained at the Congress). In order to trace with the fullest accuracy the development of this *coalition* of the *Iskra*-ite minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ites, we have reproduced all the three main types of *roll-call* votes of this kind. *C* is the vote on the equality of languages (the last of the three roll-call votes on this question is given, it being the most complete). All the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the whole Centre stood solid against us, whereas a part of the majority and a part of the minority separated from the *Iskra*-ites. *It was not yet clear which of the "Iskra"-ites were capable of forming a definite and lasting coalition with the opportunist "Right-wing" of the Congress.* Next comes type *D*—the vote on paragraph one of the Rules (of the two votes, we have taken the one which was more clear cut, that is, in which there were no abstentions). *The coalition becomes more distinct and more lasting*; *all* the *Iskra*-ites of the minority are now on the side of Akimov and Lieber, but only a very small number of *Iskra*-ites of the majority, these counterbalancing three of the "Centre" and one anti-*Iskra*-ite who had come over to our side. A mere glance at the diagram will show which elements shifted from side to side casually and temporarily and which

were drawn with irresistible force towards *a lasting coalition with the Akimovs.* The last vote (*E*—elections to the central organ, the Central Committee and the Party Council), *which in fact represents the final division into a majority and a minority,* clearly reveals the complete fusion of the *Iskra*-ite minority with the *entire* "Centre" and the *remnants* of the anti-*Iskra*-ites. By this time, of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites, *only* Comrade Brouckère remained at the Congress (Comrade Akimov had already explained his mistake to him and he had taken his proper place in the ranks of the *Martovites*). The withdrawal of the seven *most "Right"* of the *opportunists* decided the issue of the elections against Martov.*

And now, with the aid of the objective evidence of votes of *every type,* let us sum up the results of the Congress.

There has been much talk to the effect that the majority at our Congress was "*casual.*" The diagram clearly shows that in *one sense,* but in that one only, the majority may be called casual, *viz.,* in the sense that the withdrawal of the seven most opportunist delegates of the "*Right*" was *casual. Only* to the extent that this withdrawal was casual (and no more) was our majority casual. A mere glance at the diagram will show better than any long argument on whose side these seven would have been, *were bound to have been.*** But the question arises: how far was the withdrawal of the seven really casual? That is a question which those who talk freely about the "casual" character of the majority do not like to ask themselves. They find it an unpleasant question. Was it a casual thing that the most arrant representatives of the *Right* wing, and not of the *Left* wing, of our Party were the ones to withdraw? Was it a casual thing that it was *opportunists* who withdrew, and not consistent *revolutionary Social-Democrats*? Is there no connection between this "casual" withdrawal and the struggle against the opportunist wing which was waged all through the Congress and which stands out so clearly in our diagram?

One has only to ask these questions, which are so unpleasant to the minority, to realize what fact all this talk about the casual character of the majority is intended to *conceal.* It is the unquestionable and incontrovertible fact that *the minority was composed of those members of our Party who were most inclined to gravitate towards opportunism.* The minority was composed of the elements in our Party *who were the least stable* in theory *and the least consistent in matters of principle.* It was from the *Right wing*

* The seven opportunists who withdrew from the Second Congress were the five Bundists (the Bund withdrew from the Party after the principle of federation had been rejected by the Congress) and two *Rabocheye Dyelo* delegates, Comrade Martynov and Comrade Akimov. These latter left the Congress after the *Iskra*-ite League had been recognized as the *only* Party organization abroad, *i.e.,* after the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ite Foreign "Union" of Russian Social-Democrats had been dissolved. (Lenin's footnote to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

** We shall see later that *after* the Congress both Comrade Akimov and the Voronezh Committee, which has the closest *kinship* with Comrade Akimov, explicitly expressed their sympathy with the "*minority.*"

of the Party that the minority was formed. The division into a majority and a minority is a direct and inevitable continuation of that division of the Social-Democrats into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, into a Mountain and a Gironde, which did not appear only yesterday, nor in the Russian Workers' Party alone, and which no doubt will not disappear to-morrow.

This fact is of cardinal importance for an elucidation of the causes and the various stages of our disagreements. Whoever tries to *evade* the fact by denying or glossing over the struggle at the Congress and the shades of principle that emerged there, simply testifies to his own intellectual and political poverty. But in order to *disprove* the fact, it would have to be shown, *in the first place,* that the general picture of the votes and "divisions" at our Party Congress was different from the one I have drawn; and, *in the second place,* that it was the most consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats, those who in Russia have adopted the name of *Iskra*-ites, who *were wrong in substance* on all those issues over which the Congress "divided."

The fact that the minority consisted of the most opportunist, the most unstable and least consistent elements of the Party incidentally provides an answer to those numerous perplexities and objections that are addressed to the majority by people who are imperfectly acquainted with the matter, or have not given it sufficient thought. Is it not shallow, we are told, to account for the *disagreement* by a minor mistake of Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod? Yes, gentlemen, Comrade Martov's mistake was a minor one (and I said so even at the Congress, in the heat of the struggle); but this minor mistake *might* cause (*and did cause*) a lot of harm owing to the fact that Comrade Martov was pulled over to the side of delegates who had made *numbers of mistakes* and had manifested a tendency to opportunism and inconsistency of principle on numbers of questions. That Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod should have displayed instability was an individual and unimportant fact; it was not an individual fact, however, but a *Party* fact, and a *not altogether unimportant* one, that a very considerable minority had been formed of *all* the least stable elements, of *all* who either rejected *Iskra's* trend altogether and openly opposed it, or paid lip-service to it but actually sided time and again with the anti-*Iskra*-ites.

Is it not absurd to *account for* the disagreement by the prevalence of an inveterate circle spirit and revolutionary philistinism in the small circle comprised by the old *Iskra* editorial board? No, it is not absurd, because *all those in our Party* who all through the Congress had fought *for every kind of circle*, all those *who were generally incapable of rising* above revolutionary philistinism, all those who spoke of the "historical" character of the philistine and circle spirit to justify and preserve that evil, rose up in support of *this particular* circle. The fact that narrow circle interests prevailed over the Party spirit in the one little circle of the *Iskra* editorial board may, perhaps, be regarded as casual; but it was not casual that in staunch support of this circle rose up the Akimovs and Brouckères, who

attached no less (if not more) value to the "historical continuity" of the celebrated Voronezh Committee and the notorious St. Petersburg "Workers'" Organization,* the Egorovs, who lamented the "murder" of *Rabocheye Dyelo* as bitterly as the "murder" of the old editorial board (if not more so), the Makhovs, etc., etc. You can tell a man by his friends—the proverb says. And you can tell a man's *political complexion* by his political allies, by the people who vote for him.

The minor mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod was, and might have remained, a *minor* one as long as it did not serve as the starting point for a *durable alliance* between them and the whole opportunist wing of our Party, as long as it did not lead, as a result of this alliance, to a *recrudescence* of opportunism, to the exaction of *revenge* by all whom *Iskra* had fought and who were now overjoyed at a chance of *venting their spleen* on the consistent adherents of revolutionary Social-Democracy. And, in fact, as a result of the post-congress events, we are now witnessing a recrudescence of opportunism in the new *Iskra*, the exaction of revenge by the Akimovs and Brouckères (see the leaflet issued by the Voronezh Committee),** and the glee of the Martynovs, who have at last (at last!) been allowed, in the detested *Iskra*, to have a kick at the detested "enemy" for all former grievances.

Taken by itself, there was nothing dreadful, nor crucial, nor even anything abnormal in the fact that the Congress (and the Party) had divided into a Left and a Right, a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing. On the contrary, the whole past decade in the history of the Russian (and not only of the Russian) Social-Democratic movement has been leading inevitably and inexorably to such a division. The fact that it was a number of very *minor* mistakes of the Right wing, of (relatively) very unimportant dissensions, that caused the division (which seems shocking to the superficial observer and to the philistine mind), marked *a big step forward for our Party as a whole*. Formerly we used to differ over major issues, such as might even at times justify a split; now we have reached agreement on all major and important points, and are only divided by *shades*, about which we may *and should* argue, but over which it would be absurd and childish to part company (as Comrade Plekhanov has quite rightly said in his interesting article "What Should Not Be Done?" to which we shall revert). *Now* that the *anarchist behaviour* of the minority *after the Congress* has almost led to a split in the Party, one may often hear wiseacres saying:

* The Voronezh Committee, which was controlled by "Economists," had taken up a hostile attitude towards the *Iskra*, the Organization Committee and the Second Congress they were arranging. It was therefore not invited to send delegates to the Congress.

The "workers'" organization of the St. Petersburg League was formed in the autumn of 1902 by "Economists" who had broken away from the St. Petersburg "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class." Brouckère (Lydia Makhnovets) was the delegate from this organization at the Second Congress.—*Ed.*

** See this volume p. 336.—*Ed.*

"Was it worth while fighting at the Congress over such trifles as the Organization Committee episode, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group or the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, or § 1, or the dissolution of the old editorial board, etc.? Those who argue in this way are in fact introducing the circle view into Party affairs: a struggle of *shades* in the Party is *inevitable and essential* as long as it does not lead to anarchy and splits, as long as it is confined *within bounds* approved by the common consent of all comrades and Party members. And *our struggle* against the Right wing of the Party *at the Congress*, against Akimov and Axelrod, Martynov and Martov, *never exceeded those bounds*. It is enough to recall, at least, that when Comrades Martynov and Akimov were about to leave the Congress *we were all prepared* to do everything to obliterate the idea of an "insult"; *we all adopted* (by thirty-two votes) Trotsky's motion to invite these comrades to regard the explanations as satisfactory and to withdraw their statement.

[Chapters *O* and *P* have been omitted in the present edition since they are devoted to a description of the post-Congress struggle over the personal composition of the centres, *i.e.*, something which appertains least of all to the realm of principle and most of all to that of squabbling.]

Q. THE NEW *ISKRA*. OPPORTUNISM IN QUESTIONS OF ORGANIZATION

As the basis for our analysis of the principles of the new *Iskra* we should unquestionably take the two articles of Comrade Axelrod.* We have already shown at length what is the concrete meaning** of some of his favourite catchwords. We must now try to abstract ourselves from their concrete meaning and study more closely the line of thought that forced the "minority" (on any small or minor occasion) to arrive at these particular slogans rather than at any other, must examine the principles behind these slogans, irrespective of their origin, of the question of "co-option." Concessions are all the fashion nowadays, so let us make a concession to Comrade Axelrod and take his theory "seriously."

Comrade Axelrod's main thesis (the *Iskra*, No. 57) is that "from the very outset our movement harboured two opposite tendencies, the mutual antagonism of which could not fail to develop and to affect the movement parallel with its own development." To be precise: "in principle, the proletarian aim of the movement (in Russia) is the same as that of the Social-Democratic movement in the West." But in our country the influence is exercised on the worker masses "by a social element alien to them," namely.

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* The articles in question were included in the symposium "*Iskra* for Two Years," Part II, p. 122, *et seq.* (St. Petersburg 1906).

** This "concrete meaning" refers to the Congress and post-Congress struggle over the personal composition of the centres the description of which has been omitted in the present edition.

the radical intelligentsia. Comrade Axelrod thus establishes an antagonism between the proletarian and the radical-intellectual trends in our Party.

In this Comrade Axelrod is undoubtedly right. The existence of such an antagonism (and not in the Russian Social-Democratic Party alone) is beyond question. What is more, everyone knows that it is this antagonism that very largely accounts for the division of the present-day Social-Democratic movement into the revolutionary (also known as the orthodox) and the opportunist (revisionist, ministerialist, reformist) wing, which has become fully apparent in Russia, too, during the past ten years of our movement. Everyone also knows that the proletarian trend of the movement is expressed by orthodox Social-Democracy, while the trend of the democratic intelligentsia is expressed by opportunist Social-Democracy.

But, having squarely faced this piece of common knowledge, Comrade Axelrod then begins to shy and back away from it. He does not make *the slightest attempt* to analyse the way in which this division has manifested itself in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement in general, and at our Party Congress in particular, although it is about the Congress that Comrade Axelrod is writing! Like all the other editors of the new *Iskra*, Comrade Axelrod displays a *mortal fear* of the minutes of this Congress. This should not surprise us after what has been said, but in a "theoretician" who claims to be investigating the different trends in our movement it is certainly a queer case of *truth-shyness*. Backing away, because of this malady, from the latest and most accurate material on the trends in our movement, Comrade Axelrod seeks salvation in the sphere of pleasant daydreaming. He writes: "Has not legal or semi-Marxism provided our liberals with a literary leader?* Why should not prankish history provide revolutionary bourgeois democracy with a leader from the school of orthodox, revolutionary Marxism?" All we can say about this daydream which Comrade Axelrod finds so pleasant is that if history does sometimes play prankish tricks, that is no excuse for *prankish thoughts* in people who undertake to analyse history. When the liberal peeped out from under the cloak of the leader of semi-Marxism, those who wished (*and were able*) to trace back his "trends" did not allude to possible prankish tricks of history, but to tens and hundreds of instances of the mentality and logic of that leader and to those peculiarities of his literary make-up which were stamped with the reflection of Marxism in bourgeois literature. And if, after having undertaken to analyse "the general revolutionary and the proletarian trends in our movement" Comrade Axelrod could produce *nothing, absolutely nothing*, in proof or evidence that certain representatives of that orthodox wing of the Party which he detests so much have such-and-such tendencies, he thereby issued a *formal certificate of his own bankruptcy*. Comrade Axelrod's case must be very weak indeed if all he can do is to allude to possible pranks of history.

* The reference is to Struve.—*Ed.*

Comrade Axelrod's other allusion—to the "Jacobins"—is still more revealing. Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the division of the present-day Social-Democratic movement into revolutionary and opportunist has long since given rise—and not only in Russia—to "historical parallels with the era of the Great French Revolution." Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the *Girondists of the present-day Social-Democratic movement* are always resorting to the terms "Jacobinism," "Blanquism" and so on to describe their opponents. Let us then not imitate Comrade Axelrod in his truth-shyness, let us consult the minutes of our Congress and see whether they offer any material for an analysis and examination of the trends we are discussing and the parallels we are dissecting.

First example: the debate on the program at the Party Congress. Comrade Akimov ("fully agreeing" with Comrade Martynov) says: "the clause on the capture of political power (the dictatorship of the proletariat) has been formulated in such a way—as compared with the programs of all other Social-Democratic parties—that it may be interpreted, and has actually been interpreted by Plekhanov, to mean that the role of the leaders of the organization will relegate to the background the class it is leading and separate the former from the latter. Consequently, the formulation of our political tasks is exactly the same as that of the "Narodnaya Volya." (Minutes, p. 124.) Comrade Plekhanov and other *Iskra*-ites reply to Comrade Akimov and accuse him of opportunism. Does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute shows (in actual fact, and not in the imaginary pranks of history) the antagonism between the *modern Jacobins* and the modern *Girondists* in the Social-Democratic movement? And was it not because he found himself in the company of the *Girondists* of the Social-Democratic movement (owing to the mistakes he committed) that Comrade Axelrod began talking about Jacobins?

Second example: Comrade Posadovsky asserts that there is a "grave difference of opinion" over the "fundamental question" of the "absolute value of democratic principles" (p. 169). Like Plekhanov, he denies their absolute value. The leaders of the "Centre," or the Marsh (Egorov), and of the anti-*Iskra*-ites (Goldblatt) vigorously oppose this view and accuse Plekhanov of "imitating bourgeois tactics" (p. 170). *This is exactly Comrade Axelrod's idea of a connection between orthodoxy and the bourgeois trends*, the only difference being that in Axelrod's case it is vague and general, whereas Goldblatt linked it up with definite issues. Again we ask: does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute, too, *obviously* shows, at our Party Congress, the antagonism between the Jacobins and the Girondists in the present-day Social-Democratic movement? Is it not because he finds himself in the company of the Girondists that Comrade Axelrod raises this outcry against the Jacobins?

Third example: the debate on § 1 of the Rules. Who is it that defends "*the proletarian trend in our movement*"? Who is it that insists that the worker is not afraid of organization, that the proletarian has no sympathy

for anarchy, and that he values the prompting to organize? Who is it that warns us against the bourgeois intelligentsia and says that they are permeated through and through with opportunism? *The Jacobins of the Social-Democratic movement.* And who is it that tries to smuggle radical intellectuals into the Party? Who is it that is concerned about professors, high school students, freelances, the radical youth? *The Girondist Axelrod and the Girondist Lieber.*

How clumsily Comrade Axelrod defends himself against the "false accusation of opportunism" that was openly levelled at the majority of the "Emancipation of Labour" Group at our Party Congress. He defends himself in a manner that confirms the charge, for he keeps reiterating the hackneyed *Bernsteinian song about Jacobinism, Blanquism and so on!* He shouts about the menace of the radical intellectuals in order to drown his own speeches at the Party Congress which were full of concern for these intellectuals.

These "dreadful words"—Jacobinism and the rest—are expressive of nothing but *opportunism.* A Jacobin who maintains an inseparable bond with the *organization* of the proletariat, a proletariat *conscious* of its class interests, is a *revolutionary Social-Democrat.* A Girondist who yearns for professors and high school students, who is afraid of the dictatorship of the proletariat and who sighs about the absolute value of democratic demands is an *opportunist.* It is only opportunists who can still detect a danger in secret organizations today, when the idea of narrowing down the political struggle to a secret conspiracy has been rejected thousands of times in written publications and has long been rejected and swept aside by the realities of life, and when the cardinal importance of mass political agitation has been elucidated and reiterated to the point of nausea. The real basis of this fear of conspiracy, of Blanquism, is not any feature to be found in the practical movement (as Bernstein and Co. have long, and vainly, been trying to show), but the Girondist timidity of the bourgeois intellectual whose mentality is so often revealed among the Social-Democrats of today. Nothing could be more comical than these efforts of the new *Iskra* to utter a *new word* of warning (which has been uttered hundreds of times before) against the tactics of the French conspirator revolutionaries of the 'forties and 'sixties (No. 62, editorial). In the next issue of the *Iskra,* the Girondists of the present-day Social-Democratic movement will probably name a group of French conspirators of the 'forties for whom the importance of political agitation among the working masses, the importance of the labour press as the principal means by which the party influences the class, was a rudimentary truth they had learned and assimilated long ago.

However, the tendency of the new *Iskra* to repeat the ABC and go back to rudiments while pretending to be uttering something new is not without its cause; *it is an inevitable consequence of the situation* Axelrod and Martov find themselves in, now that they have landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. There is nothing for it. They have to go on repeating

opportunist phrases, they have to *go back* and try to find in the *remote past* some sort of justification for their position, which is indefensible from the point of view of the struggle at the Congress and of the shades and divisions in the Party that emerged there. To the profound Akimovist remarks about Jacobinism and Blanquism, Comrade Axelrod adds Akimovist lamentations to the effect that the "politicians" as well, and not only the "Economists" were "one-sided," excessively "infatuated," and so on and so forth. Reading the high-flown disquisitions on this subject in the new *Iskra*, which conceitedly claims to be above one-sidedness and infatuation, one asks in perplexity: whose portrait are they painting? where do they hear this talk? Who does not know that the division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians has long been obsolete? Go through the files of the *Iskra* for the last year or two before the Party Congress and you will find that the fight against "Economism" subsided and came to an end altogether as far back as 1902; you will find, for example, that in July 1903 (No. 43), the "times of Economism" are spoken of as being "definitely over." Economism is considered to be "dead and buried," and the infatuation of the politicians is regarded as clear atavism. Why, then, do the new editors of the *Iskra* revert to this dead and buried division? Do you think that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress because of the mistakes they made in the *Rabocheye Dyelo* two years ago? If we had, we would have been sheer idiots. But everyone knows that we did not, that it was not for their old, dead and buried mistakes in the *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress, but for the *new mistakes* they committed in their arguments and in the way they voted at the Congress. It was not by their stand on the *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we judged which mistakes had really been abandoned and which still lived and called for controversy, but by their stand at the Congress. By the time of the Congress the old division into Economists and politicians no longer existed; but various opportunist trends continued to exist. They found expression in the debates and voting on a number of issues, and finally led to a new division of the party into a "majority" and a "minority." The whole point is that the new editors of the *Iskra* are for obvious reasons trying to gloss over the connection that exists between this new division and *contemporary* opportunism in our Party, and are, consequently, compelled to go back from the new division to the old one. Their inability to explain the political origin of the new division (or their desire, in order to prove how accommodating they are, to cast a veil* over its origin) compels them to

* See Plekhanov's article on "Economism" in the *Iskra*, No. 53. The subtitle of the article appears to contain a slight misprint. Instead of "Reflections on the Second Party Congress," it should apparently read, "On the *League* Congress," or even "On *Co-option*." However appropriate concessions to personal claims may be under certain circumstances, it is quite inadmissible (from the Party, not the philistine standpoint) to confuse the issues that are agitating the Party and to substitute for the new mistake of Martov and Axelrod, who have begun to swing orthodoxy to opportunism,

keep harping on a division that has long been obsolete. Everyone knows that the new division is based on a difference of opinion over questions of *organization*, which began with the controversy over principles of organization (§ 1 of the Rules) and ended up with a "practice" worthy of anarchists. The old division into Economists and politicians was based mainly on a difference of opinion over questions of *tactics*.

In its efforts to justify this retreat from the more complex, truly modern and burning issues of Party life to issues that have long been settled and have now been dug up artificially, the new *Iskra* resorts to an amusing display of profundity for which there can be no other name than *khvostism*. Started by Comrade Axelrod, there runs like a crimson thread through all the writing of the new *Iskra* the profound "thought" that content is more important than form, that program and tactics are more important than organization, that "the virility of an organization is in direct proportion to the volume and importance of the content it puts into the movement," that centralism is not an "end in itself," not an "all-saving talisman," etc., etc. Great and profound truths! A program is indeed more important than tactics, and tactics are more important than organization. The alphabet is more important than etymology, and etymology more important than syntax —but what would we say of people who, having failed in an examination in syntax, went about pluming and priding themselves on having been kept over in a lower class for another year? Comrade Axelrod argued about principles of organization (§ 1) like an opportunist, and behaved inside the organization like an anarchist—and now he is trying to lend profundity to Social-Democracy. Sour grapes! What is organization, properly speaking? Why, it is only a form. What is centralism? After all, it is not a talisman. What is syntax? Why, it is less important than etymology; it is only a form of combining the elements of etymology.... "Will not Comrade Alexandrov agree with us," the new editors of the *Iskra* triumphantly ask, "when we say that the Congress did much more for the centralization of Party work by drawing up a Party program than by adopting rules, however perfect the latter may seem?" (No. 56, Supplement.) It is to be hoped that this classical utterance will acquire a historic fame no less wide and no less lasting than Comrade Krichevsky's celebrated remark to the effect that Social-Democracy, like mankind, always sets itself achievable tasks. The profundity of the new *Iskra* is of exactly the same alloy. Why was Comrade Krichevsky's phrase held up to derision? Because he tried to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of tactics—their inability to set correct political aims—by a commonplace which he wanted to palm off as philosophy. In exactly the same way the new *Iskra* tries to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of organization, to justify the instability of the intellectual dis-

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the old mistake (never recalled today by anyone except the new *Iskra*) of the Martynovs and the Akimovs, who may now be prepared, for all one knows, to swing from opportunism to orthodoxy on many questions of program and tactics.

played by certain comrades—which has led them to the point of anarcl phrasemongering—by the commonplace that a program is more import than rules, and that questions of program are more important than questic of organization! What is this but *khvostism*? What is this but plumi oneself on having been left over in a lower class for another year?

The adoption of a program contributes more to the centralization of work than the adoption of rules. How this commonplace, palmed off philosophy, smacks of the mentality of the radical intellectual, who h much more in common with bourgeois decadence than with Social-Dem racy! Why, the word centralization is used in this famous phrase qu *symbolically*. If the authors of the phrase are unable or disinclined think, they might at least have recalled the simple fact that though and the Bundists together adopted a program, this did not even save from a split, let alone lead to the centralization of our common wo Unity on questions of program and tactics is an essential but by no mea a sufficient condition for Party unity and for the centralization of Pa work (good God, what rudimentary things one has to keep repeating now days, when all concepts have been confused!). That requires, in additic unity of organization, which, in a party that has grown to be anythi more than a mere family circle, is inconceivable without formal rules, wit out the subordination of the minority to the majority, of the part to t whole. As long as there was no unity on the fundamental questions of pr gram and tactics, we bluntly admitted that we were living in a period disunity and the circle spirit; we bluntly declared that before we cou unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn; we did not even talk of t forms of a joint organization, but exclusively discussed the new (at th time they really were new) questions of how to fight opportunism on pr gram and tactics. When, as we all agreed, this fight had already ensured sufficient degree of unity, as formulated in the Party program and in t Party's resolution on tactics, we had to take the next step, and, by comm consent, we did take it, working out the *forms* of a united organizatic that would merge all the circles together. We have been dragged back anarchist conduct, to anarchist phrasemongering, to the revival of a circ in place of a Party editorial board. And this step back is being justifie on the grounds that the alphabet is more helpful to literate speech than knowledge of syntax!

The philosophy of *khvostism* which flourished three years ago in co nection with tactics is being resurrected today in connection with orga ization. Take the following argument of the new editors: "The milita Social-Democratic trend in the Party," says Comrade Alexandrov, "shoul be maintained not only by an ideological struggle, but by definite form of organization." Whereupon the editors edifyingly remark: "Not bad, th juxtaposition of ideological struggle and forms of organization. The ideo logical struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organization are just .. forms [believe it or not, that is what they say in No. 56, Supplemen

p. 4, col. 1, bottom of page!] designed to clothe a fluid and developing content—the developing practical work of the Party." That is quite in the style of the joke about a cannon ball being a cannon ball and a bomb a bomb! The ideological struggle is a process, and the forms of organization are only forms clothing the content! The point at issue is whether our ideological struggle is to have forms *of a higher type* to clothe it, forms of Party organization binding on all, or the forms of the old disunity and the old circles. We have been dragged back from higher to more primitive forms, and this is being justified on the grounds that the ideological struggle is a process, whereas forms—are just forms. That is just how Comrade Krichevsky in bygone days tried to drag us back from tactics-as-a-plan to tactics-as-a-process.

Take the pompous talk of the new *Iskra* about the "self-training of the proletariat" which is directed against those who are supposed to be in danger of missing the content because of the form. (No. 58, editorial.) Is this not Akimovism No. 2? Akimovism No. 1 used to justify the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in formulating tactical tasks by talking about the more "profound" content of the "proletarian struggle" and about the self-training of the proletariat. Akimovism No. 2 justifies the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in the theory and practice of organization by equally profound talk about organization being merely a form, and the self-training of the proletariat being the important thing. Let me tell you gentlemen who are so solicitous about the younger brother* that the proletariat is not afraid of organization and discipline! The proletariat will do nothing to have the worthy professors and high school students, who do not want to join an organization, recognized as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organization. The proletariat is trained by its whole life for organization far more radically than many an intellectual prig. Having gained some understanding of our program and our tactics, the proletariat will not start justifying backwardness in organization by arguing that the form is less important than the content. It is not the proletariat, but *certain intellectuals* in our Party who lack *self-training* in the spirit of organization and discipline, in the spirit of hostility and contempt for anarchist phrase-mongering. When they say that it is not ripe for organization, the Akimovs No. 2 libel the proletariat just as the Akimovs No. 1 libelled it when they said that it was not ripe for the political struggle. The proletarian who has become a conscious Social-Democrat and feels that he is a member of the Party will reject *khvostism* in matters of organization with the same contempt as he rejected *khvostism* in matters of tactics.

Finally, consider the profound wisdom of "Practical Worker" in the new *Iskra*. "Properly understood," he says, "the idea of a 'militant' centralized organization uniting and centralizing the *activities*" (the italics

* The "lower classes."—*Ed.*

are to make it look more profound) "of revolutionaries can naturally materialize only if such activities exist" (new and clever!); "The organization itself, being a form" (mark that!), "can only grow *simultaneously*" (the italics are the author's, as throughout this quotation) "with the growth of the revolutionary work which is its content." (No. 57.) Does this not remind you very much of the hero in the folk tale who, on seeing a funeral, cried: "Many happy returns of the day"? I am sure there is not a practical worker (in the genuine sense of the term) in our Party who does not understand that the form of our activities (*i.e.*, our organization) has been lagging behind its content for a long time, and lagging desperately, and that only the Simple Simon in the Party could shout to those who are lagging: "Keep in line; don't run ahead!" Compare our Party, let us say, with the Bund. There can be no question but that the *content** of the work of our Party is immeasurably richer, more varied, broader and deeper than that of the Bund. The scope of our theoretical views is wider, our program more developed, our influence among the working-class masses (and not among the organized artisans alone) broader and deeper, our propaganda and agitation more varied, the pulse of the political work of the leaders and of the rank and file more lively, the *popular* movements during demonstrations and general strikes grander, and our work among the non-proletarian population more energetic. And the "form"? Compared with that of the Bund, the "form," of our work is lagging unpardonably, lagging so that it is an eyesore and brings a blush of shame to the cheeks of anyone who does not merely "pick his nose" when contemplating the affairs of his Party. The fact that the organization of our work is lagging behind its content is our weak point, and it was our weak point long before the Congress, long before the Organization Committee was formed. The undeveloped and unstable character of the form makes any serious step in the further development of the content impossible; it causes a shameful stagnation, leads to a waste of energy, to a discrepancy between word and deed. We have all suffered enough from this discrepancy, yet along come the Axelrods and the "Practical Workers" of the new *Iskra* with their profound precept: the form must grow naturally, and only simultaneously with the content!

That is where a small mistake in connection with a question of organization (§ 1) will lead you, if you try to *lend profundity* to nonsense and to find philosophical justification for an opportunist phrase. Pacing slowly in timid zigzags!—we have heard this refrain in connection with questions of tactics; we are hearing it again in connection with questions of organization. *Khvostism in matters of organization* is a natural and inevitable product of the mentality of the *anarchist individualist* when he starts to

* I will not mention the fact that the *content* of our Party work was outlined at the Congress (in the program, etc.) in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy only *at the cost of a struggle*, a struggle against the very anti-*Iskra*-ites and the very Marsh whose representatives numerically predominate in our "minority".

elevate his anarchist deviations (which at the outset may have been accidental) to a *system of views*, to special *differences of principle*. At the Congress of the League we witnessed the beginnings of this anarchism, in the new *Iskra* we are witnessing attempts to elevate it to a system of views. These attempts strikingly confirm what was already said at the Party Congress about the difference between the point of view of the bourgeois intellectual who attaches himself to the Social-Democratic movement and the proletarian who has become conscious of his class interests. For instance, this same "Practical Worker" of the new *Iskra* with whose profundity we are already familiar denounces me for visualizing the Party as "an immense factory" headed by a director in the shape of the Central Committee (No. 57, Supplement). "Practical Worker" does not even guess that the dreadful word he uses immediately betrays the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who is familiar neither with the practice nor with the theory of proletarian organization. For the factory, which seems only a bogey to some, is that highest form of capitalist co-operation which has united and disciplined the proletariat, taught it to organize, and placed it at the head of all the other sections of the toiling and exploited population. And Marxism, the ideology of the proletariat trained by capitalism, has taught and is teaching unstable intellectuals to distinguish between the factory as a means of exploitation (discipline based on fear of starvation) and the factory as a means of organization (discipline based on collective work united by the conditions of a technically highly developed form of production). The discipline and organization which come so hard to the bourgeois intellectual are very easily acquired by the proletariat just because of this factory "schooling." Mortal fear of this school and utter failure to understand its importance as an organizing factor are characteristic of the ways of thinking which reflect the petty-bourgeois mode of life and which give rise to that species of anarchism which the German Social-Democrats call *Edelanarchismus, i.e.*, the anarchism of the "noble" gentleman, or aristocratic anarchism, as I would call it. This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party organization as a monstrous "factory"; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as "serfdom" (see Axelrod's articles); division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragi-comical outcry against people being transformed into "wheels and cogs" (to turn editors into contributors being considered a particularly atrocious species of such transformation); mention of the organizational rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful remark (intended for the "formalists") that one could very well dispense with rules altogether.

Incredible as it may seem, it was a didactic remark of just this sort that Comrade Martov addressed to me in the *Iskra*, No. 58, quoting, for greater weight, my own words in "A Letter to a Comrade." Well, what is it if not "aristocratic anarchism," and *khvostism* to cite examples from

the era of disunity, the era of the circles, to *justify* the preservation and glorification of the circle spirit and anarchy in the era of the Party?

Why did we not need rules before? Because the Party consisted of separate circles, unconnected by any organizational tie. Any individual could pass from one circle to another at his own "sweet will," for he was not faced with any formulated expression of the will of the whole. Disputes within the circles were not settled by rules, "but *by a struggle and by threats to resign*," as I put it in "A Letter to a Comrade," citing the experience of a number of circles and of our own editorial circle of six in particular. In the era of the circles, this was natural and inevitable, but it never occurred to anybody to extol it, to regard it as ideal; everyone complained of the disunity, everyone was tired of it and longed for the time when the isolated circles would be fused into a formally constituted party organization. And now that this fusion has taken place, we are being dragged back and, under the guise of higher organizational views, treated to anarchist phrasemongering! To those who are accustomed to the loose dressing gown and slippers of the Oblomov* circle domesticity, formal rules seem narrow, restrictive, irksome, petty and bureaucratic, a bond of serfdom and a fetter on the free "process" of the ideological struggle. Aristocratic anarchism cannot understand that formal rules are needed precisely in order to replace the narrow circle ties by the broad Party tie. It was unnecessary and impossible to formulate the internal tie of a circle or the ties between circles, for these ties rested on friendship or on a "confidence" for which no reason or motive had to be given. The Party tie cannot and must not rest on either of these; it must be founded on *formal*, "bureaucratically" worded rules (bureaucratic from the standpoint of the undisciplined intellectual), strict adherence to which can alone safeguard us from the wilfulness and caprices characteristic of the circles, from the circle methods of scrapping that goes by the name of the free "process of the ideological struggle."

The editors of the new *Iskra* try to trump Alexandrov with the didactic remark that "confidence is a delicate matter and cannot be knocked into people's hearts and minds" (No. 56, Supplement). The editors do not realize that by this talk about confidence, *naked* confidence, they are once more betraying their aristocratic anarchism and organizational *khvostism*. When I was a member of a circle only—whether it was the circle of the six editors or the *Iskra* organization—I was entitled to justify my refusal, say, to work with X merely on the grounds of lack of confidence, without stating reason or motive. But now that I have become a member of a party, I am *no longer entitled* to plead lack of confidence in general, for that would throw open the doors to all the freaks and whims of the old circles; I *have to* give formal reasons for my "confidence" or "lack of confidence," that is, I must cite a formally established principle of our program, tactics or rules; I must

* *Oblomov*—the hero of Goncharov's novel of the same name, an embodiment of inertia, supineness and a passive, vegetating existence.—*Ed.*

not just declare my "confidence" or "lack of confidence" without giving reasons for them, but must realize that *reasons must be given* for my decisions—and generally for all decisions of any section of the Party—to the whole Party; I have to adhere to a *formally prescribed* procedure when giving expression to my "lack of confidence," or when trying to secure the acceptance of the views and wishes that follow from this lack of confidence. We have risen above the *circle* view that "confidence" does not have to be accounted for to the *Party* view which demands adherence to a formally prescribed procedure of expressing, accounting for and *testing* our confidence. But the editors are trying to drag us back, and are calling their *khvostism* "new views on organization"!

Listen to the way our so-called Party editors talk about the literary groups that might demand representation on the editorial board. "We shall not get indignant and begin to shout about discipline," we are admonished by these aristocratic anarchists who have always looked down on such a thing as discipline. We shall either "arrange the matter" (*sic!*) with the group, if it is reasonable, or just ridicule its demands.

Dear, dear, what a lofty and noble rebuff to vulgar "factory" formalism! But in reality it is the old circle phraseology furbished up a little and served up to the Party by an editorial board which does not feel that it is a Party body, but the survival of an old circle. The intrinsic falsity of this position *inevitably leads to the anarchist profundity of elevating the disunity* which they pharisaically proclaim to be obsolete to a *principle* of Social-Democratic organization. There is no need for a hierarchy of higher and lower Party bodies and authorities—aristocratic anarchism regards such a hierarchy as the bureaucratic invention of ministries, departments, etc. (see Axelrod's article); there is no need for the part to submit to the whole; there is no need for any "formal bureaucratic" definition of *Party* methods of "arranging matters" or of parting ways. Let the old circle scrapping be sanctified by pompous talk about "genuinely Social-Democratic" methods of organization.

This is where the proletarian who has been through the school of the "factory" can and should teach a lesson to anarchist individualism. The class-conscious worker has long ago emerged from the state of infancy when he used to fight shy of the intellectual as such. The class-conscious worker prizes the richer store of knowledge and the wider political horizon which he finds in Social-Democratic intellectuals. But as we proceed with the building of a *real* party, the class-conscious worker must learn to distinguish the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army from the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who flaunts his anarchist talk, he must learn to *insist* that the duties of a Party member be fulfilled not only by the rank and file, but by the "people on top" as well; he must learn to treat *khvostism* in matters of organization with the contempt with which in the old days he used to treat *khvostism* in matters of tactics!

Inseparably connected with Girondism and aristocratic anarchism is the

last characteristic feature of the new *Iskra's* attitude towards matters of organization, namely, its defence of *autonomism* as against centralism. This is the meaning in principle (if it has any such meaning) of its outcry against bureaucracy and autocracy, of its regrets over the "undeserved neglect of the non-*Iskra*-ites" (who defended autonomism at the Congress), of its comical howls about the demand for "unqualified obedience," of its bitter complaints of "pompadour methods," etc., etc. The opportunist wing of any party always defends and justifies all retrograde tendencies, whether in program, tactics or organization. The new *Iskra's* defence of retrograde tendencies in matters of organization (*khvostism*) is closely connected with the defence of *autonomism*. True, autonomism has, generally speaking, been so discredited by the three years' propaganda work of the old *Iskra* that the new *Iskra* is ashamed, *as yet*, to advocate it openly; it still assures us of its sympathy for centralism, but shows it only by printing the word centralism in italics. Actually, it is enough to apply the slightest touch of criticism to the "principles" of the "true Social-Democratic" (not anarchistic?) quasi-centralism of the new *Iskra* for the autonomist standpoint to be detected at every step. Is it not now clear to everyone that on the subject of organization Axelrod and Martov have swung over to Akimov? Have they not solemnly admitted it themselves in the significant words, "undeserved neglect of the non-*Iskra*-ites"? And what was it but autonomism that Akimov and his friends defended at our Party Congress?

It was autonomism (if not anarchism) that Martov and Axelrod defended at the Congress of the League when, with amusing zeal, they tried to prove that the part need not submit to the whole, that the part is autonomous in defining its relation to the whole, that the rules of the Foreign League, in which the relation is thus formulated, are valid, in defiance of the will of the Party majority, in defiance of the will of the Party centre. It is autonomism, too, that Comrade Martov is now openly defending in the columns of the new *Iskra* (No. 60) in connection with the right of the Central Committee to appoint members to the local committees. I shall not speak of the puerile sophistries which Comrade Martov used to defend autonomism at the Congress of the League, and is still using in the new *Iskra*—the important thing here is to note the undoubted tendency to *defend autonomism as against centralism,* which is a fundamental characteristic of opportunism in matters of organization.

Perhaps the only attempt to *analyse* the concept bureaucracy is the distinction drawn in the new *Iskra* (No. 53) between the "formal *democratic* principle" (author's italics) and the "formal *bureaucratic* principle." This distinction (which, unfortunately, was no more developed or explained than the allusion to the non-*Iskra*-ites) contains a grain of truth. Bureaucracy *versus* democracy is the same thing as centralism *versus* autonomism; it is the organizational principle of the revolutionary Social-Democrats as opposed to the organizational principle of the opportunist Social-Democrats. The latter strive to proceed from the bottom upward, and, therefore,

wherever possible and as far as possible, advocate autonomism and a "democracy" which is carried (by the over-zealous) to the point of anarchism. The former strive to proceed from the top downward, and advocate an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in respect to the parts. In the period of disunity and the circles, this top from which the revolutionary Social-Democrats strove to proceed organizationally was inevitably one of the circles, the one which was most influential because of its activity and its revolutionary consistency (in our case, the *Iskra* organization). Now that real Party unity has been restored and the obsolete circles dissolved in this unity, this top is inevitably the *Party Congress,* as the supreme organ of the Party; the Congress as far as possible includes representatives of all the active organizations, and, by appointing the central bodies (often with a membership which satisfies the advanced elements of the Party more than the backward elements, and which is more to the taste of its revolutionary wing than its opportunist wing) makes them the top until the next Congress. Such, at any rate, is the case among the Social-Democratic Europeans, although this custom, which is so detested in principle by the anarchists, is gradually beginning, not without difficulty and not without conflicts and squabbles, to spread to the Social-Democratic Asiatics.

It is most interesting to note that these fundamental characteristics of opportunism in matters of organization (autonomism, aristocratic or intellectual anarchism, *khvostism* and Girondism) are *mutatis mutandis* (with corresponding modifications) to be observed in all the Social-Democratic parties of the world, wherever there is a division into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing (and where is there not?). Only quite recently this was very strikingly revealed in the German Social-Democratic Party, when its defeat at the elections in the 20th electoral division of Saxony (known as the Göhre incident)* brought the question of the *principles* of party organization to the fore. That this incident should have become an issue of principle was largely due to the zeal of the German opportunists. Göhre (an ex-parson, author of that not uncelebrated book, *Drei Monate Fabrikarbeiter*** and one of the "heroes" of the Dresden Congress) was himself an extreme opportunist, and the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*Socialist Monthly*), the organ of the consistent German opportunists, at once "took up the cudgels" on his behalf.

Opportunism in program is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organization. The exposition of the "new" point of view was undertaken by Comrade Wolfgang Heine. To give the reader some

* Göhre was returned to the Reichstag on June 16, 1903, from the 15th division of Saxony, but resigned after the Dresden Congress. The electorate of the 20th division, which had fallen vacant on the death of Rosenow, wanted to offer the seat to Göhre. The Central Council of the Party and the Central Agitation Committee for Saxony opposed this, and although they had no formal right to forbid Göhre's nomination, they succeeded in getting him to decline. The Social-Democrats were defeated at the polls.

** *Three Months as a Factory Worker.—Ed.*

idea of the political complexion of this typical intellectual, who on joining the Social-Democratic movement brought with him his opportunist habits of thought, it is enough to say that Comrade Wolfgang Heine is something less than a German Comrade Akimov and something more than a German Comrade Egorov.

Comrade Wolfgang Heine took the warpath in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* with no less pomp than Comrade Axelrod in the new *Iskra.* The very title of his article is priceless: "Democratic Observations on the Göhre Incident" (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*, No. 4, April). The contents are no less thunderous. Comrade W. Heine rises up in arms against "encroachments on the autonomy of a constituency," champions the "democratic principle," and protests against the interference of an "appointed authority" (*i.e.*, the Central Council of the Party) in the free election of deputies by the people. The point at issue, Comrade W. Heine admonishes us, is not a casual incident, but a general *"tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party,"* a tendency, he says, which was to be observed before, but which is now becoming particularly dangerous. It must be "recognized as a principle that the local institutions of the Party are the arteries of Party life" (a plagiarism on Comrade Martov's pamphlet, *Once More in the Minority*). We must not "get accustomed to the idea that all important political decisions must emanate from one centre," and we must warn the Party against "a doctrinaire policy which loses contact with life" (borrowed from Comrade Martov's speech at the Party Congress to the effect that "life will claim its own"). Carrying his argument further, Comrade W. Heine says: "... If we go down to the roots of the matter, if we abstract ourselves from personal conflicts, which here, as everywhere, have played no small part, we shall find that this bitterness against the *revisionists*" (the italics are the author's and evidently hint at a distinction between fighting revisionism and fighting revisionists) "is mainly expressive of the distrust of the Party officials for '*outsiders*'" (W. Heine had evidently not yet read the pamphlet about combating the state of siege, and therefore resorted to an Anglicism—*Outsidertum*), "the distrust of tradition for the unusual, of the impersonal institution for everything individual," "in a word, that tendency which we have defined above as a tendency toward bureaucracy and centralism in the party."

The idea of "discipline" inspires Comrade W. Heine with a no less noble disgust than Comrade Axelrod.... "The revisionists," he writes, "have been accused of lack of discipline for having written for the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*—whose Social-Democratic character has even been brought into question because it is not *controlled by the Party.* This attempt to narrow down the concept 'Social-Democratic,' this insistence on *discipline* in the sphere of ideological production, where absolute freedom should prevail" (remember that the ideological struggle is a process whereas the forms of organization are only forms) "in themselves point to the tendency towards bureaucracy and the suppression of individuality." And W. Heine goes on

and on, fulminating against this detestable tendency to create "*one* big all-embracing organization, as centralized as possible, *one* set of tactics and *one* theory," against the demand for "unqualified obedience," "blind submission," against "over-simplified centralism," etc., etc., literally "in the Axelrod manner."

The controversy started by W. Heine spread, and as there were no squabbles about co-option in the German Party to obscure the issue, and as the German Akimovs display their complexion not only at congresses but also in a permanent periodical of their own, the controversy soon boiled down to an analysis of the principles of the orthodox and revisionist trends in matters of organization. Karl Kautsky came forward (in *Die Neue Zeit*, 1904, No. 28, in an article "*Wahlkreis und Partei*"—"Constituency and Party") as one of the spokesmen of the revolutionary trend (which, exactly as in our Party, was of course accused of "dictatorship," "inquisitorial" tendencies and other dreadful things). "W. Heine's article," he says, "reveals the line of thought of the whole revisionist trend." Not only in Germany, but in France and Italy as well, the opportunists are all in favour of autonomism, of a slackening of Party discipline, of reducing it to nought; everywhere their tendencies lead to *disorganization* and to corrupting the "democratic principle" and converting it into *anarchism*. "Democracy does not mean absence of authority," says Karl Kautsky, instructing the opportunists on the *subject of organization*, "*democracy does not mean anarchy; it means* the rule of the masses over their representatives, as distinct from other forms of rule where the supposed servants of the people are in reality their masters." K. Kautsky traces at length the disruptive role played by opportunist autonomism in various countries; he shows that it is precisely the fact that "*a great number of bourgeois elements*"* have joined the Social-Democratic movement that lends strength to opportunism, autonomism and the tendency to violate discipline, and once more he reminds us that "organization is the weapon that will emancipate the proletariat," that "organization is the characteristic weapon of the proletariat in the class struggle."

In Germany, where opportunism is weaker than in France or Italy, "autonomist tendencies have so far led to nothing but more or less high-flown declamations against dictators and grand inquisitors, against excommunication** and heresy hunting, and to endless cavilling, which would only result in endless squabbling if replied to by the other side."

It is not surprising that in Russia, where opportunism in the Party is even weaker than in Germany, autonomist tendencies should have produced fewer ideas and more "high-flown declamations" and squabbling.

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* Karl Kautsky mentioned *Jaurès* as an example. The more these people deviated towards opportunism, the more "they were bound to consider Party discipline an improper constraint on their free personality."

** *Bannstrahl:* excommunication. This is the German equivalent of the Russian "state of siege" and "emergency laws." It is the "dreadful word" of the German opportunists.

It is not surprising that Kautsky arrives at the following conclusion: "There is probably no other issue on which the revisionists of all countries, despite their multiplicity of form and hue, are so alike as on the question of organization." Karl Kautsky too defines the basic trends of orthodoxy and revisionism in this sphere by the "dreadful words": bureaucracy *versus* democracy. "We are told," he says, "that to give the Party leadership the right to influence the selection of a candidate (for parliament) by the constituencies would be a 'shameful violation of the democratic principle, which demands that all political activity proceed from the bottom upward, by the independent activity of the masses, and not from the top downward, by bureaucratic means....' But if there is any democratic principle, it is that the majority must have its way against the minority, and not the other way round...." The election of a member of parliament by any constituency is an important question for the Party as a whole, which should influence the nomination of candidates, if only through the Party's representatives (*Vertrauensmänner*). "Whoever considers this too bureaucratic or too centralistic let him suggest that candidates be nominated by the direct vote of the whole Party membership (*sämmtlicher Parteigenossen*). If he thinks this is not practicable, he must not complain of a lack of democracy when this function, like many others that affect the whole Party, is exercised by one or by several Party bodies." It has long been a "common law" in the German Party for constituencies to "come to a friendly understanding" with the Party leadership about the choice of a candidate. "But the Party has grown too big for this tacit common law to suffice any longer. Common law ceases to be a law when it ceases to be regarded as natural and self-evident, when its stipulations, and even its very existence, are *called in question*. Then it becomes absolutely essential to formulate the law specifically, to codify it," to adopt a more "precise statutory definition (*statutarische Festlegung*) and, accordingly, greater strictness (*grössere Straffheit*) of organization."

Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist wing and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organization, the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and "bureaucracy," between the tendency to relax and the tendency to tighten organization and discipline, between the mentality of the unstable intellectual and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity. What, one asks, was the attitude to this conflict of *bourgeois democracy*—not the bourgeois democracy which prankish history has only promised in private to show to Comrade Axelrod some day, but the real and actual bourgeois democracy which in Germany has spokesmen no less learned and observant than our own gentlemen of *Osvobozhdeniye*? German bourgeois democracy at once reacted to the new controversy and—like Russian bourgeois democracy, like bourgeois democracy always and everywhere—rose up solidly in behalf of the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party. The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, leading

organ of the German stock exchange, published a thunderous editorial (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, April 7, 1904, No. 97, evening edition) which shows that the unscrupulous habit of plagiarizing Axelrod is becoming a veritable disease with the German press. The stern democrats of the Frankfurt stock exchange lash furiously at "autocracy" in the Social-Democratic Party, "party dictatorship," at the "autocratic domination of the Party authorities," at these "excommunications" which are intended "as it were, to chastise all the revisionists" (recall the "false accusation of opportunism"), at the insistence on "blind submission," "deadening discipline," "servile subordination" and the transforming of Party members into "political corpses" (that is much stronger than wheels and cogs!). "All distinctiveness of personality," the knights of the stock exchange indignantly exclaim at the sight of the undemocratic regime in the Social-Democratic Party, "all individuality must be persecuted, don't you see, for they threaten to lead to the French state of affairs, to Jaurèsism and Millerandism, as was stated in so many words by Zindermann, who made the report on the subject" at the Party Congress of the Saxon Social-Democrats.

* * *

And so, in so far as the new catchwords of the new *Iskra* on organization contain any principles at all, there can be no doubt that they are opportunist principles. This conclusion is moreover confirmed by the whole analysis of our Party Congress which divided up into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, and by the example of *all* European Social-Democratic parties, where opportunism in organization finds expression in the same tendencies, in the same accusations, and very often in the same catchwords. Of course, the national peculiarities of the various parties and the different political conditions in different countries leave their impress and make German opportunism quite dissimilar from French opportunism, French opportunism from Italian opportunism and Italian opportunism from Russian opportunism. But the similarity of the fundamental division of all these parties into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, the similarity of the line of thought and the tendencies of opportunism in organization stand out clearly in spite of all the difference of conditions mentioned.*

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* No one will doubt today that the old division into Economists and politicians among the Russian Social-Democrats on questions of tactics was similar to the division of the whole Social-Democratic movement of the world into opportunists and revolutionaries, although the difference between Comrades Martynov and Akimov, on the one hand, and Comrades von Vollmar and von Elm or Jaurès and Millerand, on the other, may be very great. Nor will anyone doubt the similarity of the main divisions on questions of organization, in spite of the enormous difference between the conditions of politically unfranchised and politically free countries. It is extremely characteristic that the highly principled editors of the new *Iskra*, while briefly touching on the controversy between Kautsky and Heine (No. 64), fearfully *evaded* the trends of *principle* of opportunism and orthodoxy *in general* on questions of organization.

The presence of large numbers of radical intellectuals in the ranks of our Marxists and our Social-Democrats has made, and is making, the existence of opportunism, produced by their mentality, inevitable in the most varied spheres and in the most varied forms. We fought opportunism on the fundamental problems of our world conception, on questions of our program, and a complete divergence of aims inevitably led to an irrevocable division between the Social-Democrats and the liberals who had corrupted our legal Marxism. We fought opportunism on tactical questions, and our divergence with Comrades Krichevsky and Akimov on these less important issues was naturally only temporary, and was not accompanied by the formation of different parties. We must now vanquish the opportunism of Martov and Axelrod in matters of organization, which are, of course, even less fundamental than questions of program and tactics, but which have now come to the forefront in our Party life.

When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a feature that is characteristic of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, diffuseness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade formulating an issue clearly and decisively, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and to reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, good and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth. Comrade Eduard Bernstein, an opportunist in questions of program, "agrees" with the revolutionary program of his party, and although he is most likely anxious to have it "radically revised," he considers it inopportune and inexpedient, and not so important as the elucidation of "general principles" of "criticism" (which mainly consist in uncritically borrowing principles and catchwords, from bourgeois democracy). Comrade von Vollmar, an opportunist in questions of tactics, also agrees with the old tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy and also confines himself mostly to declamations, petty amendments and sneers rather than openly advocating any definite "ministerial" tactics. Comrades Martov and Axelrod, opportunists in questions of organization, have also so far failed to produce, though directly challenged to do so, any definite statement of principles that could be "fixed by statute"; they too, would like, they most certainly would like, a "radical revision" of our rules of organization (the *Iskra*, No. 58, p. 2, col. 3), but they would prefer to devote themselves first to "general problems of organization" (for a really radical revision of our Rules, which, in spite of § 1, are centralist rules, would inevitably lead, if carried out in the spirit of the new *Iskra*, to autonomism; and Comrade Martov, of course, does not like to admit even to himself that, *in principle*, his trend is towards autonomism). Their "principles" of organization therefore display all the colours of the rainbow: the predominant note is innocent and high-sounding declamations against autocracy and bureaucracy, against blind obedience and wheels and cogs—declamations that are so innocent that it is very, very difficult to discern in them what is really

concerned with principle and what is really concerned with co-option. But the further you go, the worse it gets: attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable "bureaucracy" inevitably lead to autonomism; attempts to "deepen" and justify inevitably lead to vindicating backwardness, to *khvostism*, to Girondist phrasemongering. At last there emerges the principle of *anarchism*, as the sole really definite principle, which for that reason stands out in practice in particular relief (practice is always in advance of theory). Sneering at discipline—autonomism—anarchism—there you have the ladder by which our opportunism in the sphere of organization now climbs and now descends, skipping from rung to rung and skilfully evading any definite statement of its principles.* Exactly the same stages are displayed by opportunism in questions of program and tactics—sneering at "orthodoxy," narrowness and immobility—revisionist "criticism" and ministerialism—bourgeois democracy.

There is a close psychological connection between this hatred of discipline and that incessant nagging note of *injury* which is to be detected in all the writings of all opportunists today in general, and of our minority in particular. They are being persecuted, hounded, ejected, besieged and bullied. There is far more psychological and political truth in these catchwords than was probably suspected even by the author of the pleasant and witty joke about bullies and bullied. For you have only to take the minutes of our Party Congress to see that the minority are all those who suffer from a sense of injury, all those who at one time or another and for one reason or another were offended by the revolutionary Social-Democrats. There are the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites, whom we "offended" so badly that they withdrew from the Congress; there are the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ites, who were mortally offended by the slaughter of all organizations in general and of their own in particular; there is Comrade Makhov, who had to put up with offence every time he took the floor (for every time he did, he invariably made a fool of himself); and lastly, there are Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod, who were offended by the "false accusation of opportunism" in connection with § 1 of the Rules and by their defeat in the elections. All

* Those who recall the debate on § 1 will now clearly see that the mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod in connection with § 1 had *inevitably* to lead, when developed and deepened, to opportunism in matters of organization. Comrade Martov's initial idea—self-enrollment in the Party—was nothing but false "democracy," the idea of building the Party from the bottom upward. My idea, on the other hand was "bureaucratic" in the sense that the Party was to be built from the top downward, from the Party Congress to the individual Party organizations. The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, anarchist phrasemongering, and opportunist, *khvostist* profundity were all to be discerned already in the debate on § 1. Comrade Martov says that "new ideas are beginning to be worked out" by the new *Iskra*. That is true in the sense that he and Axelrod are really pushing ideas in a new direction, beginning with § 1. The only trouble is that this direction is an opportunist one. The more they "work" in *this* direction the deeper will they sink in the mire.

these mortal offences were not the accidental outcome of impermissible witticisms, rude behaviour, frenzied controversy, slamming of doors and shaking of fists, as so many philistines imagine to this day, but the inevitable political outcome of the whole three years' ideological work of the *Iskra*. If in the course of these three years we were not just wagging our tongues, but giving expression to convictions which were to be transformed into deeds, we had to fight the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Marsh" at the Congress. And when, together with Comrade Martov, who had fought in the front line with vizor up, we had offended such heaps of people, very little remained, we had only to offend Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov ever so little, for the cup to overflow. Quantity was transformed into quality. The negation was negated. All the offended forgot their mutual squabbles, fell weeping into each other's arms, and raised the banner of "revolt against Leninism."*

A revolt is a splendid thing when it is the advanced elements who revolt against the reactionary elements. When the revolutionary wing revolts against the opportunist wing, it is a good thing. When the opportunist wing revolts against the revolutionary wing, it is a bad business.

Comrade Plekhanov is compelled to take part in this bad business in the capacity of a prisoner of war, so to speak. He tries to "vent his spleen" by fishing out isolated clumsy phrases by the author of some resolution in favour of the "majority," and exclaiming: "Poor Comrade Lenin! What fine orthodox supporters he has!" (The *Iskra*, No. 63, Supplement.)

Well, Comrade Plekhanov, all I can say is that if I am poor, the editors of the new *Iskra* are downright paupers. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached such utter destitution as to have to shut my eyes to the Party Congress and hunt for material for the exercise of my wit in the resolutions of committee men. However poor I may be, I am a thousand times better off than those whose supporters do not utter a clumsy phrase inadvertently, but on every issue—whether in relation to organization, tactics or program—stubbornly and steadfastly adhere to principles which are the very opposite of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached the stage where I have to *conceal from the public* the praises lavished on me by such supporters. And that is what the editors of the new *Iskra* have to do.

Reader, do you know what the Voronezh Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party stands for? If not, read the minutes of the Party Congress. You will learn from them that the line of that committee is fully expressed by Comrade Akimov and Comrade Brouchère, who at the Congress fought the revolutionary wing of the Party all along the line, and who scores of times were ranked as opportunists by everybody, from Comrade Plekhanov to Comrade Popov. Well, this Voronezh Commit-

* This amazing expression is Comrade Martov's.

tee, in its January leaflet (No. 12, January 1904), makes the following statement:

"A great and important event in the life of our steadily growing Party took place last year, when the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., a congress of the representatives of its organizations, was held. Convening a party congress is a very complicated business, and, under the monarchy, a dangerous and difficult one. It is therefore not surprising that it was carried out *in a far from perfect way*, and that the Congress itself, although it passed off without mishap, did not fulfil all the Party's expectations. The comrades whom the Conference of 1902 commissioned to convene the Congress were arrested, and *the Congress was arranged by persons who represented only one of the trends in Russian Social-Democracy, viz., the "Iskra"-ites. Many* organizations of Social-Democrats who did not happen to be *Iskra*-ites were not invited to take part in the work of the Congress; *this is one of the reasons why* the task of drawing up a *program and rules* for the Party was carried out by the Congress in an *extremely imperfect way*; the delegates themselves admit that there are important flaws in the rules 'which may lead to dangerous misunderstandings.' The *Iskra*-ites themselves split at the Congress, and many prominent workers in our R.S.D.L.P. who hitherto had appeared to be in full agreement with the *Iskra* program of action have admitted that many of its views, advocated *mainly by Lenin and Plekhanov*, are impracticable. Although the latter gained the upper hand at the Congress, the mistakes of the theoreticians are being quickly corrected by the forces of real life and the demands of real work, in which all the non-*Iskra*-ites are taking part and which, since the Congress, have introduced important amendments. *The "Iskra" has undergone a profound change and promises* to pay careful heed to the demands of all workers in the Social-Democratic movement generally. Thus, although *the work of the Congress will have to be revised* at the next Congress, and, as is obvious to the delegates themselves, was unsatisfactory, *and therefore cannot be accepted by the Party as unimpeachable decisions*, the Congress has cleared up the situation inside the Party, has provided much material for the further theoretical and organizational work of the Party, and has been an experience of immense instructive value for the common work of the Party. The decisions of the Congress and the rules it has drawn up will be *taken into account* by all the organizations, but many will *refrain from being guided by them exclusively, in view of* their obvious imperfections.

"Fully realizing the importance of the common work of the Party, the Voronezh Committee actively *responded* in all matters concerning the organization of the Congress. It fully recognizes the importance of what has taken place at the Congress and *welcomes the change undergone by 'Iskra,'* which has become the Central Organ (chief organ). Although the state of affairs in the Party and in the Central Committee does not satisfy us *as yet*, we trust that by common effort the difficult work of organizing the Party will be perfected. In view of false rumours, the Voronezh Committee informs the comrades that there is no question of the

Voronezh Committee leaving the Party. The Voronezh Committee realizes perfectly what a dangerous precedent might be created by the withdrawal of a workers' organization like the Voronezh Committee from the R.S.D.L.P., *what a reproach this would be to the Party*, and how disadvantageous it would be to workers' organizations which might follow this example. We must not cause new splits, but persistently strive to unite all class-conscious workers and Socialists in one party. Besides, the Second Congress was not a constituent congress, but an ordinary one. Expulsion from the Party can only be by decision of a Party court, and no organization, not even the Central Committee, has the right to expel any Social-Democratic organization from the Party. Furthermore, the Second Congress adopted paragraph 8 of the Rules, according to which every organization is autonomous in its local affairs, and this *fully entitles the Voronezh Committee to put its views on organization into practice and advocate them in the Party*."

The editors of the new *Iskra*, in quoting this leaflet in No. 61, reprinted the second half of this tirade, which we give here in large type; as for the first half, here printed in small type, the editors *preferred to omit it*.

They were ashamed.

R. A FEW WORDS ON DIALECTICS. TWO REVOLUTIONS

A general glance at the development of our Party crisis will readily show that in the main, with minor exceptions, the composition of the two contending sides remained unchanged throughout. It was a struggle between the revolutionary wing and the opportunist wing in our Party. But this struggle passed through the most varied stages, and anyone who wants to understand the vast amount of literature that has already been accumulated, the mass of fragmentary evidence, passages torn from their context, isolated accusations, and so on and so forth, must thoroughly familiarize himself with the peculiarities of each of these stages.

In each of these stages the circumstances of the struggle and the immediate object of attack are essentially different; each stage is, as it were, a separate battle in one general military campaign. Our struggle cannot be understood at all unless the concrete circumstances of each battle are studied. But once that is done we shall clearly find that the development does actually proceed dialectically, by way of contradictions: the minority becomes the majority, and the majority becomes the minority; each side passes from the defensive to the offensive, and from the offensive to the defensive; the starting of the ideological struggle (§ 1) is "negated" and gives place to an all-pervading squabble:* but then begins the "negation of the negation,"

* The difficult problem of drawing a line between squabbling and a difference of principle now solves itself: all that relates to co-option is squabbling; all that

and, having found a way of living more or less in "peace and harmony" on the various central bodies, we return to the starting point, the purely ideological struggle; but by now this "thesis" has been enriched by all the results of the "anitithesis" and has become a higher synthesis, in which the isolated, casual error in connection with § 1 has grown into a quasi-system of opportunist views on matters of organization, and in which the connection *between this fact and the basic division of our Party into a revolutionary* wing and an opportunist wing becomes increasingly apparent to all. In a word, not only do oats grow according to Hegel, but the Russian Social-Democrats war among themselves according to Hegel.

But the great Hegelian dialectics which Marxism made its own, having first turned it right side up again, must never be confused with the vulgar trick of justifying the zigzags of politicians who swing over from the revolutionary wing to the opportunist wing of the Party, or with the vulgar habit of lumping together distinct statements, the distinct incidents in the development of different stages of a single process. Genuine dialectics does not justify individual errors, but studies the inevitable turns, proving that they were inevitable by a detailed study of the process in all its concreteness. The basic principle of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete.... And, one thing more, the great Hegelian dialectics should never be confused with that vulgar worldly wisdom so well expressed by the Italian saying: *mettere la coda dove non va il capo* (sticking in the tail where the head will not go through).

The outcome of the dialectical development of our Party struggle has been two revolutions. The Party Congress was a real revolution, as Comrade Martov justly remarked in his "Once More in the Minority." The wits of the minority are also right when they say: "The world moves in revolutions; well, we have made a revolution!" They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is true, too, that generally speaking the world *does move in revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete* revolution is not defined by this general aphorism; there are revolutions which are more like reaction, to paraphrase the unforgettable expression of the unforgettable Comrade Makhov. We must know whether it was the revolutionary wing or the opportunist wing of the Party which was the actual force that made the revolution, we must know whether it was revolutionary or opportunist principles that inspired the fighters, before we can determine whether the "world" (our Party) was moved forward or backward by *any concrete revolution.*

Our Party Congress was unique and unprecedented in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. For the first time a secret revolutionary party succeeded in emerging from the darkness of underground life into broad daylight, displaying to the world the whole course and outcome of

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relates to an analysis of the struggle at the Congress, to the dispute over § 1 and to the swing towards opportunism and anarchism is a difference of principle.

the struggle within our Party, the whole nature of our Party and of each of its more or less noticeable sections in relation to program, tactics and organization. For the first time we succeeded in throwing off the traditions of circle looseness and revolutionary philistinism, in bringing together dozens of the most varied groups, many of which had been fiercely warring among themselves and had been linked together solely by the force of an idea and were prepared (in principle, that is) to sacrifice all their group aloofness and group independence for the sake of the great whole which we were for the first time actually creating—the *Party*. But in politics sacrifices are not obtained gratis, they have to be won in battle. The battle over the slaughter of the organizations was bound to be terribly fierce. The fresh breeze of free and open struggle blew into a gale. The gale swept away—and a good thing that it did!—every conceivable remnant of the circle interests, sentiments and traditions without exception, and for the first time created authoritative bodies that were really Party bodies.

But it is one thing to call oneself something, and another to be it. It is one thing to sacrifice the circle system in principle for the benefit of the Party, and another to renounce one's own circle. The fresh breeze proved to be too fresh for those who were used to musty philistinism. "The Party was unable to stand the strain of its first congress," as Comrade Martov rightly put it (inadvertently) in his "Once More in the Minority." The sense of injury over the slaughter of the organizations was too strong. The furious gale raised all the mud from the bottom of our Party stream; and the mud took its revenge. The old hidebound circle spirit overpowered the newly born Party spirit. The opportunist wing of the Party, utterly routed though it had been, defeated—temporarily, of course—the revolutionary wing, having been accidentally reinforced by the Akimov windfall.

The result of all this is the new *Iskra*, which is compelled to develop and deepen the error its editors committed at the Party Congress. The old *Iskra* taught the truths of revolutionary struggle. The new *Iskra* teaches the worldly wisdom of yielding and living in harmony with everyone. The old *Iskra* was the organ of militant orthodoxy. The new *Iskra* treats us to a recrudescence of opportunism—chiefly on questions of organization. The old *Iskra* earned the honour of being detested by the opportunists, both Russian and West-European. The new *Iskra* has "grown wise" and will soon cease to be ashamed of the praises lavished on it by the extreme opportunists. The old *Iskra* marched unswervingly towards its goal, and there was no discrepancy between its word and its deed. The inherent falsity of the position of the new *Iskra* inevitably leads—independently even of anyone's will or intention—to political hypocrisy. It cries out against the circle spirit in order to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the Party spirit. It pharisaically condemns splits, as if one can imagine any way of avoiding splits in any at all organized party except by the subordination of the minority to the majority. It says that heed must be paid to revolutionary public opinion, yet, while keeping dark the praises of the Akimovs, it indulges in

petty scandalmongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party! How shameful! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!

One step forward, two steps back.... It happens in the lives of individuals, and it happens in the history of nations and in the development of parties. It would be criminal cowardice to doubt even for a moment the inevitable and complete triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, of proletarian organization and Party discipline. We have already won a great deal, and we must go on fighting, undeterred by reverses, fighting steadfastly, scorning the philistine methods of circle scrapping, *doing our very utmost to preserve the single party tie among all the Russian* Social-Democrats which has been established at the cost of so much effort, and striving by dint of stubborn and systematic work to make all Party members, and the workers in particular, fully and intelligently acquainted with the duties of Party members, with the struggle at the Second Party Congress, with all the causes and all the stages of our disagreements, and with the utter disastrousness of opportunism, which, in the sphere of organization, as in the sphere of our program and our tactics, helplessly surrenders to the bourgeois psychology, uncritically adopts the point of view of bourgeois democracy, and blunts the weapon of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the "lower depths" of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the decrepit rule of Russian tsardom, nor the senile rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army. Its ranks will become more and more serried, in spite of all zigzags and backward steps, in spite of the opportunist phrasemongering of the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy, in spite of the smug praise of the antiquated circle spirit, and in spite of the tinsel and fuss of *intellectual* anarchism.

First published
as a separate pamphlet
in May 1904, Geneva

THE PERIOD OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

TWO TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

PREFACE

In a revolutionary period it is very difficult to keep abreast of events, which provide an astonishing amount of new material for an evaluation of the tactical slogans of revolutionary parties. The present pamphlet was written before the Odessa events.* We have already pointed out in the *Proletary* (No. 9—"Revolution Teaches") that these events have forced even those Social-Democrats who created the "uprising-as-a-process" theory, and who rejected propaganda for a provisional revolutionary government, virtually to pass over, or to begin to pass over, to the side of their opponents. Revolution undoubtedly teaches with a rapidity and thoroughness which appear incredible in peaceful periods of political development. And, what is particularly important, it teaches not only the leaders, but the masses as well.

There is not the slightest doubt that the revolution will teach social-democratism to the working-class masses in Russia. The revolution will confirm the program and tactics of the Social-Democratic Party in actual practice, by demonstrating the true nature of the various classes of society, by demonstrating the bourgeois character of our democracy and the real aspirations of the peasantry, which, while it is revolutionary in the bourgeois-democratic sense, harbours within itself, not the idea of "socialization," but a new class struggle between the peasant bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat. The old illusions of the old Narodniks, which are so clearly reflected, for instance, in the draft program of the "Socialist-Revolutionary Party" in the attitude it takes towards the question of the development of capitalism in Russia, towards the question of the democratic character of our "society," and towards the question of the meaning of a complete victory of a peasant uprising—all these illusions will be mercilessly and completely blown to the winds by the revolution. For the first time it will give the various classes their real political baptism. These classes will emerge from the revolution with a definite political physiognomy, for they will have revealed themselves, not only in the programs and tactical slogans of their ideologists, but also in the open political action of the masses.

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* Reference is to the mutiny on the armoured cruiser *Potemkin*. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

Undoubtedly, the revolution will teach us, and will teach the masses of the people. But the question that now confronts a militant political party is whether we shall be able to teach the revolution anything; whether we shall be able to make use of our correct Social-Democratic doctrine, of our bond with the only thoroughly revolutionary class, the proletariat, to put a proletarian imprint on the revolution, to carry the revolution to a real and decisive victory, not in word but in deed, and to paralyse the instability, half-heartedness and treachery of the democratic bourgeoisie.

It is to this end that we must direct all our efforts. And the achievement of this end will depend, on the one hand, on the correctness of our appraisal of the political situation, on the correctness of our tactical slogans, and, on the other hand, on the extent to which these slogans are supported by the real fighting strength of the working-class masses. All the usual, regular, current work of all the organizations and groups of our Party, the work of propaganda, agitation and organization, is directed towards strengthening and extending the ties with the masses. This work is always necessary; but less than at any other time can it be considered sufficient in a revolutionary period. At such a time the working class has an instinctive urge for open revolutionary action, and we must learn to define the aims of this action correctly, and then spread a knowledge and understanding of these aims as widely as possible. It should not be forgotten that the current pessimism about our ties with the masses serves more than ever as a screen for bourgeois ideas regarding the role of the proletariat in the revolution. Undoubtedly, we still have a great deal to do to educate and organize the working class; but the whole question now is: where should the main political emphasis in this education and organization be placed? On the trade unions and legally existing societies, or on armed insurrection, on the work of creating a revolutionary army and a revolutionary government? Both serve to educate and organize the working class. Both are, of course, necessary. But the whole question now, in the present revolution, amounts to this: what is to be emphasized in the work of educating and organizing the working class—the former or the latter?

The outcome of the revolution depends on whether the working class will play the part of a subsidiary to the bourgeoisie, a subsidiary that is powerful in the force of its onslaught against the autocracy but impotent politically, or whether it will play the part of leader of the people's revolution. The class-conscious representatives of the bourgeoisie are perfectly aware of this. That is precisely why the *Osvobozhdeniye* praises Akimovism, "Economism" in Social-Democracy, which is *now* placing the trade unions and the legally existing societies in the forefront. That is why Mr. Struve welcomes (the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 72) the Akimovist trend in the principles of the new *Iskra*. That is why he comes down so heavily on the detested revolutionary narrowness of the decisions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

In order to lead the masses, it is particularly important for Social-Democracy at the present time to advance correct tactical slogans. There is nothing more dangerous in time of revolution than underrating the importance of tactical slogans consistent with our principles. For example, the *Iskra*, in No. 104, virtually passes over to the side of its opponents in the Social-Democratic movement, and yet, at the same time, disparages the significance of slogans and tactical decisions which are in advance of the times and which indicate the path along which the movement is progressing, although with a number of failures, errors, etc. On the contrary, the working out of correct tactical decisions is of immense importance for a party which desires to lead the proletariat in the spirit of the consistent principles of Marxism, and not merely to drag along in the wake of events. In the resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and of the Conference of the section which has split away from the Party,* we have the most precise, most carefully thought-out, and most complete expression of tactical views—views not casually expressed by individual writers, but accepted by the responsible representatives of the Social-Democratic proletariat. Our Party is in advance of all the others, for it has a precise program, accepted by all. It must also set the other parties an example of strict adherence to its tactical resolutions, in contradistinction to the opportunism of the democratic bourgeoisie of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and the revolutionary phrasemongering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who only during the revolution suddenly bethought themselves to come forward with a "draft" of a program and investigate for the first time whether it is a bourgeois revolution that they are witnessing.

That is why we think it a most urgent task of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to study carefully the tactical resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and of the Conference, to define what deviations have been made in them from the principles of Marxism, and to get a clear understanding of the concrete tasks of the Social-Democratic proletariat in a democratic revolution. It is to this task that the present pamphlet is devoted. The testing of our tactics from the standpoint of the principles of Marxism and of the lessons of the revolution is also necessary for those who really desire to pave the way for unity of tactics as a basis for the future complete unity of the whole Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, and not to confine themselves to admonitions alone.

N. LENIN

July 1905

* The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (held in London in May 1905) was attended only by Bolsheviks, while in the "Conference" (held in Geneva at the same time) only Mensheviks participated. In the present pamphlet the latter are frequently referred to as new *Iskra*-ites because while continuing to publish the *Iskra* they declared, through their then adherent Trotsky, that there was a gulf between the old and the new *Iskra*. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

1. AN URGENT POLITICAL QUESTION

At the present revolutionary juncture the question of the convocation of a popular constituent assembly is on the order of the day. Opinions differ as to how to solve this question. Three political tendencies are to be observed. The tsarist government admits the necessity of convening representatives of the people, but under no circumstances does it intend to allow this assembly to be a popular and constituent assembly. It seems willing to agree, if we are to believe the newspaper reports on the work of the Bulygin Commission,* to a consultative assembly, to be elected without freedom to carry on agitation and on the basis of strict qualifications or a strict class system. The revolutionary proletariat, inasmuch as it is guided by the Social-Democratic Party, demands complete transfer of power to a constituent assembly, and for this purpose strives to obtain not only universal suffrage and complete freedom to conduct agitation, but also the immediate overthrow of the tsarist government and its replacement by a provisional revolutionary government. Finally, the liberal bourgeoisie, expressing its wishes through the leaders of the so-called "Constitutional-Democratic Party," does not demand the overthrow of the tsarist government, does not advance the slogan calling for a provisional government, and does not insist on real guarantees that the elections be absolutely free and fair and that the assembly of representatives be a genuinely popular and a genuinely constituent assembly. As a matter of fact, the liberal bourgeoisie, which is the only serious social support of the *Osvobozhdeniye* tendency, is striving to effect as peaceful a deal as possible between the tsar and the revolutionary people, a deal, moreover, that would give a maximum of power to itself, the bourgeoisie, and a minimum to the revolutionary people—the proletariat and the peasantry.

Such is the political situation at the present time. Such are the three main political trends, corresponding to the three main social forces of contemporary Russia. We have shown on more than one occasion (in the *Proletary*, Nos. 3, 4, 5) how the *Osvobozhdentsi* use pseudo-democratic phrases to cover up their half-hearted, or, to put it more directly and plainly, their treacherous, perfidious policy towards the revolution. Let us now consider how the Social-Democrats appraise the tasks of the moment. The two resolutions passed quite recently by the Third Congress of the Russian Social-

* See footnote on p. 29.—*Ed.*

Democratic Labour Party and by the "Conference" of the section which has split away from the Party provide excellent material for this purpose. The question as to which of these resolutions more correctly appraises the political situation and more correctly defines the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat is of enormous importance, and every Social-Democrat who is anxious to fulfil his duties as a propagandist, agitator and organizer intelligently, must study this question very carefully, leaving all irrelevant considerations entirely aside.

By Party tactics we mean the political conduct of the Party, or the nature, tendency and methods of its political activity. Tactical resolutions are adopted by Party congresses in order to define exactly the political conduct of the Party as a whole with regard to new tasks, or in view of a new political situation. Such a new situation has been created by the revolution that has started in Russia, *i.e.*, the complete, decided and open rupture between the overwhelming majority of the people and the tsarist government. The new question concerns the practical methods to be adopted in convening a genuinely popular and genuinely constituent assembly (the question of such an assembly was officially settled by the Social-Democratic Party in theory long ago, before any other party, in its Party program). Since the people have parted company with the government, and the masses realize the necessity of setting up a new order, the party which made it its object to overthrow the government must necessarily consider what government to set up in place of the old government which is to be overthrown. A *new* question, the question of a provisional revolutionary government, arises. In order to give a complete answer to this question the Party of the class-conscious proletariat must make clear: 1) the *significance* of a provisional revolutionary government in the revolution now going on and in the entire struggle of the proletariat in general; 2) its *attitude* towards a provisional revolutionary government; 3) the precise conditions of *Social-Democratic participation* in this government; 4) the conditions under which pressure is to be brought to bear on this government from *below, i.e.*, in the event that the Social-Democrats do not participate in it. Only after all these questions are cleared up, will the political conduct of the Party in this sphere be principled, clear and firm.

Let us now consider how the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party answers these questions. The following is the full text of the resolution:

Resolution on Provisional Revolutionary Government

Whereas:

"1) both the immediate interests of the proletariat and the interests of its struggle for the ultimate aims of Socialism require the widest possible measure of political liberty and, consequently, the replacement of the autocratic form of government by a democratic republic;

"2) the establishment of a democratic republic in Russia is possible only as a result of a victorious popular uprising, whose organ of power will be a provisional revolutionary government, which alone will be capable of securing complete freedom of agitation during the election campaign and of convening a constituent assembly that will really express the will of the people, an assembly elected on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot;

"3) under the present social and economic order this democratic revolution in Russia will not weaken, but strengthen the domination of the bourgeoisie, which at a certain moment will inevitably try, stopping at nothing, to take away from the Russian proletariat as many of the gains of the revolutionary period as possible.

"The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party resolves that:

"a) it is necessary to disseminate among the working class a concrete idea of the most probable course of the revolution and of the necessity, at a certain moment in the revolution, for the appearance of a provisional revolutionary government, from which the proletariat will demand the realization of all the immediate political and economic demands contained in our program (the minimum program);*

"b) subject to the relation of forces, and other factors which cannot *be exactly determined beforehand, representatives of our Party may* participate in the provisional revolutionary government for the purpose of relentless struggle against all counter-revolutionary attempts and of the defence of the independent interests of the working class;

"c) an indispensable condition for such participation is that the Party should exercise strict control over its representatives and that the independence of the Social-Democratic Party, which is striving for a complete Socialist revolution and, consequently, is irreconcilably hostile to all bourgeois parties, should be strictly maintained;

"d) whether the participation of Social-Democrats in the provisional revolutionary government prove possible or not, we must prop-

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* *The Minimum Program*—a program adopted at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

"This program consisted of two parts: a maximum program and a minimum program. The maximum program dealt with the principal aim of the working-class party, namely, the Socialist revolution, the overthrow of the power of the capitalists, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The minimum program dealt with the immediate aims of the Party, aims to be achieved before the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, namely, the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, the establishment of a democratic republic, the introduction of an 8-hour working day, the abolition of all survivals of serfdom in the countryside, and the restoration to the peasants of the cut-off lands (*otrezki*) of which they had been deprived by the landlords." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, p. 41.)—*Ed.*

agate among the broadest masses of the proletariat the necessity for permanent pressure to be brought to bear upon the provisional government by the armed proletariat, led by the Social-Democratic Party, for the purpose of defending, consolidating and extending the gains of the revolution."

2. WHAT DOES THE RESOLUTION OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. ON A PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT TEACH US?

The resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, as is evident from its title, is devoted wholly and exclusively to the question of a provisional revolutionary government. Hence, it includes the question as to whether Social-Democrats may participate in a provisional revolutionary government. On the other hand, it deals only with the question of a provisional revolutionary government and with nothing else; consequently, it does not include, for example, the question of the "conquest of power" in general, etc. Was the Congress right in eliminating this and similar questions? Undoubtedly it was right in doing so, since the political situation of Russia does not give rise to such questions as immediate issues. On the contrary, the issue raised by the whole of the people at the present time is the overthrow of the autocracy and the convocation of a constituent assembly. Party congresses must take up and decide issues which are of vital political importance by reason of the prevailing conditions and the objective course of social development, and not those questions which this or that writer happened to touch upon opportunely or inopportunely.

Of what import is a provisional revolutionary government in the present revolution, and in the general struggle of the proletariat? The resolution of the Congress explains this by pointing at the very outset to the need for the "widest possible measure of political liberty," both from the standpoint of the immediate interests of the proletariat and from the standpoint of the "ultimate aims of Socialism." And complete political liberty requires that the tsarist autocracy be replaced by a democratic republic, as has already been recognized by our Party program. The stress laid in the resolution of the Congress on the slogan of a democratic republic is necessary both as a matter of logic and in point of principle; for it is precisely complete freedom that the proletariat, as the foremost champion of democracy, is striving to attain. Moreover, it is all the more opportune to stress this at the present time because right now the monarchists, namely, the so-called Constitutional-"Democratic," or *Osvobozhdeniye* Party in our country, are flying the colours of "democracy." In order to establish a republic, an assembly of people's representatives is absolutely indispensable. Moreover, such an assembly must be a popular (on the basis of universal and equal

suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot) and a constituent assembly. This too is recognized in the Congress resolution, further on. But the resolution does not stop there. In order to establish a *new order "that will really* express the will of the people" it is not enough to call a representative assembly a constituent assembly. It is necessary for this assembly to have the authority and power to "constitute." Taking this into consideration, the resolution of the Congress does not confine itself to a formal slogan calling for a "constituent assembly," *but adds the material conditions which alone* will enable that assembly really to carry out its tasks. Such specification of the conditions that will enable an assembly which is constituent in name to become constituent in fact is absolutely imperative, for, as we have pointed out more than once, the liberal bourgeoisie, as represented by the *Constitutional-Monarchist party, is deliberately distorting* the slogan of a popular constituent assembly, reducing it to a hollow phrase.

The Congress resolution states that a provisional revolutionary government *alone*, one, moreover, that will be the organ of a victorious popular uprising, can secure full freedom of agitation in the election campaign and *convene an assembly that will really* express the will of the people. Is this postulate correct? Those who would undertake to refute it would have to assert that it is possible for the tsarist government not to side with the reaction, that the tsarist government is capable of being neutral during the elections, that it will see to it that the will of the people is really expressed. *Such assertions are so absurd that no one would venture to defend them* openly; but they are being dragged in secretly, under cover of liberalism, by these same *Osvobozhdentsi*. A constituent assembly must be convened by someone; someone must guarantee the freedom and fairness of the elections; someone must invest such an assembly with power and authority. *Only a revolutionary government, which is the organ of the uprising, can* desire this in all sincerity and be capable of doing all that is required to achieve this. The tsarist government will inevitably work against this. A liberal government, which will come to terms with the tsar, and which does not rely entirely on the popular uprising, cannot sincerely desire this and could not accomplish *it even if it desired it most sincerely*. Therefore, the resolution of the Congress gives the only correct and entirely consistent democratic slogan.

However, an evaluation of the role of a provisional revolutionary government would be incomplete and false if the class nature of the democratic revolution were *lost sight of*. The resolution therefore adds that the revolution will strengthen the domination of the bourgeoisie. This is inevitable under the present, *i.e.*, capitalist, social and economic system. And the strengthening of the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat after the latter has secured some measure of political liberty must inevitably lead to a desperate struggle between them for power, must lead to desperate attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie "to take away from the proletariat the gains of the revolutionary period." That is why the proletariat,

which is fighting for democracy in front of all and at the head of all, must not forget for a single moment about the new antagonisms latent in bourgeois democracy and about the new struggle.

Thus, the section of the resolution which we have just reviewed fully sets forth the role of a provisional revolutionary government; in its relation to the struggle for freedom and for a republic, to a constituent assembly and to the democratic revolution, which clears the ground for a new class struggle.

The next question is, what should be the attitude of the proletariat in general towards a provisional revolutionary government? The Congress resolution answers this first of all by directly advising the Party to spread among the working class the conviction that a provisional revolutionary government is necessary. The working class must be made aware of this. Whereas the "democratic" bourgeoisie leaves the question of the overthrow of the tsarist government in the shade, we must push it to the fore and insist on the necessity of a provisional revolutionary government. More than that, we must outline a program of action for such a government that would conform with the objective conditions of the historic period through which we are now passing and with the aims of proletarian democracy. This program is the *entire* minimum program of our Party, the program of the immediate political and economic reforms which, on the one hand, are fully possible of realization on the basis of the existing social and economic relationships and, on the other hand, are requisite for the next step forward, for the achievement of Socialism.

Thus, the resolution fully explains the nature and aims of a provisional revolutionary government. By its origin and fundamental nature such a government must be the organ of the popular uprising. Its formal purpose must be to serve as the medium for convening a popular constituent assembly. The substance of its activities must be to put into effect the minimum program of proletarian democracy, which is the only program capable of safeguarding the interests of the people which has risen against the autocracy.

It might be argued that a provisional government, since it is only provisional, cannot carry out a constructive program which has not yet received the approval of the whole of the people. Such an argument would merely be the sophistry of reactionaries and "absolutists." To abstain from carrying out a constructive program is tantamount to tolerating the existence of the feudal regime of the putrid autocracy. Only a government of traitors to the cause of the revolution could tolerate such a regime, but not a government which is the organ of a popular uprising. It would be mockery for anyone to propose that we should refrain from exercising freedom of assembly pending the confirmation of such freedom by a constituent assembly, on the plea that the constituent assembly might not confirm freedom of assembly! It is just as much of a mockery to object to the immediate execution of the minimum program by a provisional revolutionary government.

Finally, let us note that by making it the task of the provisional revolutionary government to put into effect the minimum program, the resolution eliminates the absurd, semi-anarchist ideas about putting the maximum program into effect immediately, about the conquest of power for a Socialist revolution. The degree of economic development of Russia (an objective condition) and the degree of class consciousness and organization of the broad masses of the proletariat (a subjective condition inseparably connected with the objective condition) make the immediate complete emancipation of the working class impossible. Only the most ignorant people can ignore the bourgeois nature of the democratic revolution which is now taking place; only the most naive optimist can forget how little as yet the masses of the workers are informed of the aims of Socialism and of the methods of achieving it. And we are all convinced that the emancipation of the workers can be effected only by the workers themselves; a Socialist revolution is out of the question unless the masses become class conscious, organized, trained and educated in open class struggle against the entire bourgeoisie. In answer to the anarchist objections that we are putting off the Socialist revolution, we say: we are not putting it off, but are taking the first step towards it, in the only possible way, along the only correct road, namely, the road of a democratic republic. Whoever wants to arrive at Socialism by a different road, other than that of political democracy, will inevitably arrive at absurd and reactionary conclusions, both in the economic and the political sense. If any workers ask us at the given moment why not go ahead and carry out our maximum program we shall answer by pointing out how far the masses of the democratically disposed people still are from Socialism, how undeveloped class antagonisms still are, how unorganized the proletarians still are. Organize hundreds of thousands of workers all over Russia; enlist the sympathy of millions for our program! Try to do this without confining yourselves to high-sounding but hollow anarchist phrases—and you will see at once that in order to achieve this organization, in order to spread Socialist enlightenment, we must achieve the fullest possible measure of democratic reforms.

Let us proceed further. Once we are clear about the role of a provisional revolutionary government and the attitude of the proletariat toward it, the following question arises: would it be right for us to participate in it (action from above) and, if so, under what conditions? What should be our action from below? The resolution supplies precise answers to both these questions. It definitely declares that it is *admissible* in principle for Social-Democrats to participate in a provisional revolutionary government (during the period of a democratic revolution, the period of struggle for a republic). By this declaration we once and for all dissociate ourselves both from the anarchists, who answer this question in the negative on principle, and from the *khvostists* among the Social-Democrats (like Martynov and the new *Iskra*-ites) who have *tried to frighten* us with the prospect of a situation wherein it might prove necessary for us to participate in such a

government. Through this declaration the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party rejected, once and for all, the idea expressed by the new *Iskra* that the participation of Social-Democrats in a provisional revolutionary government would be a variety of Millerandism, that it is inadmissible in principle, as sanctifying the bourgeois order, etc.

But its admissibility in principle does not, of course, solve the question of its practical expediency. Under what conditions is this new form of struggle—the struggle "from above," recognized by the Congress of the Party—expedient? It goes without saying that at the present time it is impossible to speak of concrete conditions, such as relation of forces, etc., and the resolution, naturally, refrains from defining these conditions in advance. No intelligent person would venture at the present time to prophesy anything on this subject. What we can and must do is to determine the nature and aim of our participation. This is precisely what is done in the resolution, which points out two objectives of our participation: 1) a relentless struggle against counter-revolutionary attempts, and 2) the defence of the independent interests of the working class. At a time when the liberal bourgeoisie is beginning to talk assiduously about the psychology of reaction (see Mr. Struve's most instructive "Open Letter" in the *Osvobozhdeniye,* No. 72), in an attempt to frighten the revolutionary people and to impel it to show a spirit of compliance with regard to the autocracy—at such a time it is particularly appropriate for the Party of the proletariat to call attention to the task of waging a real war against counter-revolution. In the final analysis, force alone can settle the great problems of political liberty and the class struggle, and it is our business to prepare and organize this force and to employ it actively, not only for defensive purposes, but also for the purpose of attack. The long reign of political reaction in Europe, which has lasted almost uninterruptedly since the days of the Paris Commune, has too greatly accustomed us to the idea that action can proceed only "from below," has too greatly inured us to seeing only defensive struggles. There can be no doubt that we have now entered a new era: a period of political upheavals and revolutions has been ushered in. In a period such as Russia is passing through at the present time, it is impermissible to be circumscribed by the old set formulae. We must propagate the idea of action from above, we must prepare for the most energetic, offensive action, and we must study the conditions under which these actions are to take place and the forms they are to assume. The Congress resolution lays special emphasis on two of these conditions: one refers to the formal aspect of Social-Democratic participation in a provisional revolutionary government (strict control of the Party over its representatives), the other—to the very nature of such participation (never for an instant to lose sight of the aim of effecting a complete Socialist revolution).

Having thus explained from all aspects the policy of the Party with regard to action "from above"—this new, hitherto almost unprecedented

method of struggle—the resolution proceeds to provide also for the eventuality that we shall not be able to act from above. We must exercise pressure on the provisional revolutionary government from below in any case. In order to be able to exercise this pressure from below, the proletariat must be armed—for in a revolutionary situation matters develop very quickly to the stage of open civil war—and must be led by the Social-Democratic Party. The object of its armed pressure is that of "defending, consolidating and extending the gains of the revolution," *i.e.*, those gains which from the standpoint of the interests of the proletariat must consist in the fulfilment of the whole of our minimum program.

This brings our brief analysis of the resolution of the Third Congress on a provisional revolutionary government to a close. As the reader can see, the resolution explains the importance of this new question, the attitude of the Party of the proletariat toward it, and the policy of the Party both inside a provisional revolutionary government and oustide of it.

Let us now consider the corresponding resolution of the "Conference."

3. WHAT IS A "DECISIVE VICTORY OF THE REVOLUTION OVER TSARISM"?

The resolution of the "Conference" is devoted to the question: *"The Conquest of Power and Participation in a Provisional Government."** As we have already pointed out, the very manner in which the question is put betrays confusion. On the one hand the question is presented in a narrow way: It deals only with our participation in a provisional government and not in general with the tasks of the Party in regard to a provisional revolutionary government. On the other hand, two totally dissimilar questions are confounded, *viz.*, the question of our participation in one of the stages of the *democratic* revolution and the question of the *Socialist* revolution. Indeed, the "conquest of power" by Social-Democracy is a Socialist revolution, nor can it be anything else if we use these words in their direct and usually accepted sense. If, however, we are to understand these words to mean the conquest of power for a democratic revolution and not for a Socialist revolution, then what is the point in talking not only about participation in a provisional revolutionary government but also about the "conquest of power" *in general*. Obviously our "Conferencers" were not very clear themselves as to what they should talk about: the democratic or the Socialist revolution. Those who have followed the literature on this question know that it was Comrade Martynov, in his notorious *Two Dictatorships*, who started this muddle: the new *Iskra*-ites are very reluctant to recall the manner in which this question was presented (before

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* The full text of this resolution can be reconstructed by the reader from the quotations given on pp. 400, 403, 407, 431 and 433 [see this volume pp. 355, 359, 363-64, 390 and 393.—*Ed.*] of the present pamphlet. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

January 9*) in that model of a *khvostist* work. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that it exercised ideological influence on the Conference.

But let us leave the title of the resolution. Its contents reveal mistakes incomparably more profound and serious. Here is the first part:

> "A decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism may be marked either by the establishment of a provisional government, which will emerge from a victorious popular uprising, or by the revolutionary initiative of one representative institution or another, which, under direct revolutionary pressure of the people, decides to set up a popular constituent assembly."

Thus, we are told that a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism may be marked either by a victorious uprising, or—by a decision of a representative institution to set up a constituent assembly! What does this mean? How are we to understand it? A decisive victory may be marked by a "decision" to set up a constituent assembly?? And such a "victory" is put side by side with the establishment of a provisional government which will "emerge from a victorious popular uprising"!! The Conference failed to note that a *victorious* popular uprising and the *establishment* of a provisional government would signify the victory of the revolution *in actual fact*, whereas a "decision" to set up a constituent assembly would signify a victory of the revolution *in words* only.

The Conference of the Mensheviks, or new *Iskra*-ites, committed the same error that the liberals, the *Osvobozhdentsi* are constantly committing. The *Osvobozhdentsi* prattle about a "constituent" assembly and bashfully close their eyes to the fact that power and force remain in the hands of the tsar. They forget that in order to "constitute" one must possess the *power* to do so. The Conference also forgot that it is still a far cry from a "decision" adopted by representatives—no matter who they are—to the fulfilment of that decision. The Conference further forgot that so long as power remained in the hands of the tsar, all decisions passed by any representatives whatsoever would remain empty and miserable prattle, as was the case with the "decisions" of the Frankfurt Parliament, famous in the history of the German Revolution of 1848. In his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Marx, the representative of the revolutionary proletariat, castigated the Frankfurt liberal *Osvobozhdentsi* ("Emancipationists") with merciless sarcasm precisely because they uttered fine words, adopted all sorts of democratic "decisions," "constituted" all kinds of liberties, while actually they left power in the hands of the king and failed to organize an armed struggle against the military forces at the disposal of the king. And while the

* Reference is to the events of January 9, 1905 in Petersburg, when thousands of workers, with their wives and children, marched in procession to the Winter Palace to deliver a petition to the tsar. The peaceful demonstration was met with a hail of bullets from the tsarist troops. The January 9th events were the starting point of the 1905 revolution.—*Ed.*

Frankfurt *Osvobozhdentsi* were prattling—the king bided his time, consolidated his military forces, and the counter-revolution, relying on real force, utterly routed the democrats with all their fine "decisions."

The Conference put on a par with a decisive victory the very thing that lacks the essential condition of victory. How was it possible for Social-Democrats who recognize the republican program of our Party to commit such an error? In order to understand this strange phenomenon we must turn to the resolution of the Third Congress on the section which has split away from the Party.* This resolution refers to the fact that various tendencies "akin to Economism" have survived in our Party. Our "Conferencers" (it is not for nothing that they are under the ideological guidance of Martynov) talk of the revolution in exactly the same way as the Economists talked of the political struggle or the eight-hour day. The Economists immediately gave currency to the "theory of stages": 1) the struggle for rights, 2) political agitation, 3) political struggle; or, 1) a ten-hour day, 2) a nine-hour day, 3) an eight-hour day. The results of this "tactics-as-a-process" are sufficiently well known to all. Now we are invited to make sure in advance that we divide the revolution itself properly into stages: 1) the tsar convenes a representative body; 2) this representative body "decides" under pressure of the "people" to set up a constituent assembly; 3) . . . the Mensheviks have not yet agreed among themselves as to the third stage; they have forgotten that the revolutionary pressure of the people *will encounter the counter-revolutionary pressure of tsarism and that*, therefore, either the "decision" will remain unfulfilled or the issue will be

* We cite this resolution in full. "The Congress places on record that since the time of the Party's fight against Economism, certain trends have survived in the R.S.D.L.P. which, in various degrees and respects, are akin to Economism and which betray a common tendency to belittle the importance of the element of consciousness in the proletarian struggle, and to subordinate it to the element of spontaneity. On questions of organization, the representatives of these tendencies put forward, in theory, the principle of organization-as-a-process which is out of harmony with methodical Party work, while in practice they systematically deviate from Party discipline in very many cases, and in other cases preach to the least enlightened section of the Party the idea of a wide application of the elective principle, without taking into consideration the objective conditions of Russian life, and so strive to undermine the only basis for Party ties that is possible at the present time. In tactical questions these trends manifest themselves in a tendency to narrow the scope of Party work, declaring their opposition to the Party pursuing completely independent tactics with regard to the liberal-bourgeois parties, denying that it is possible and desirable for our Party to assume the rôle of organizer in the people's uprising and opposing the participation of the Party in a provisional democratic-revolutionary government under any conditions whatsoever.

"The Congress instructs all Party members everywhere to conduct an energetic ideological struggle against such partial deviations from the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy; at the same time it is of the opinion that persons who share such views to a greater or lesser extent may belong to Party organizations on the indispensable condition that they recognize the Party congresses and the Party Rules and wholly submit to Party discipline." (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

decided after all by the victory or the defeat of the popular uprising. The resolution of the Conference is an exact reproduction of the reasoning of the Economists to the effect that a decisive victory of the workers may be marked either by the realization of the eight-hour day in a revolutionary way, or by the grant of a ten-hour day and a "decision" to go over to a nine-hour day. . . . Exactly the same.

It may be objected perhaps that the authors of the resolution did not mean to place the victory of an uprising *on a par* with the "decision" of a representative institution convened by the tsar, that they only wanted to provide for the Party's tactics in either case. To this our answer would be: 1) the text of the resolution plainly and unambiguously describes the *decision* of a representative institution as "a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism." Perhaps that is the result of careless wording, perhaps it could be corrected after consulting the minutes, but, so long at is it not corrected, the present wording can have only one meaning, and this meaning is entirely in keeping with the *Osvobozhdeniye* line of reasoning. 2) The *Osvobozhdeniye* line of reasoning, into which the authors of the resolution have drifted, stands out in incomparably greater relief in other literary productions of the new *Iskra*-ites. For instance, the organ of the Tiflis Committee, *Social-Democrat* (in the Georgian language; praised by the *Iskra* in No. 100), in the article "The Zemsky Sobor and Our Tactics," goes so far as to say that the "tactics" "which make the Zemsky Sobor the centre of our activities" (about the convocation of which, we may add, nothing definite is known as yet!) "*are more advantageous for us*" than the "tactics" of armed insurrection and the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government. We shall refer to this article again further on. 3) No objection can be made to a preliminary discussion of what tactics the Party should adopt in the event of the victory of the revolution as well as in the event of its defeat, in the event of a successful uprising as well as in the event the uprising fails to develop into a serious force. It is possible that the tsarist government may succeed in convening a representative assembly for the purpose of coming to terms with the liberal bourgeoisie; providing for that eventuality, the resolution of the Third Congress speaks plainly about "hypocritical policy," "pseudo-democracy," "a caricature of popular representation, something like the so-called *Zemsky Sobor*."* But the point

* The following is the text of this resolution on the attitude towards the tactics of the government on the eve of the revolution:

"*Whereas* for purposes of self-preservation the government during the present revolutionary period, while intensifying the usual repressions directed mainly against the class-conscious elements of the proletariat, at the same time 1) tries by means of concessions and promises of reforms to corrupt the working class politically and thereby to divert it from, the revolutionary struggle; 2) for the same purpose clothes its hypocritical policy of concessions in a pseudo-democratic cloak, beginning with invitations to the workers to elect their representatives to commissions and conferences and ending with the establishment of a caricature of popular representation, something like the so-called Zemsky Sobor; 3) organizes the so-called Black-Hundreds and in-

is that this is not said in the resolution on a provisional revolutionary government, for it has nothing to do with a provisional revolutionary government. This eventuality defers the problem of the uprising and of the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government; it modifies this problem, etc. The point in question now is not that all kinds of combinations are possible, that both victory and defeat are possible, that there may be direct or circuitous paths; the point is that it is impermissible for a Social-Democrat to confuse the minds of the workers with regard to the genuinely revolutionary path, that it is impermissible for him to take the cue from the *Osvobozhdeniye* and describe as a decisive victory that which lacks the *main* requisite for victory. It is possible that we may not even obtain the eight-hour day at one stroke, but only after following a long and circuitous path; but what would you say of a man who calls such impotence, such weakness of the proletariat as renders it *incapable* of counteracting procrastination, delays, haggling, treachery and reaction, a victory for the workers? It is possible that the Russian revolution will end in an "abortive constitution," as was once stated in the *Vperyod*,* but can this justify a Social-Democrat, who on the eve of a decisive struggle would call this abortion a "decisive victory over tsarism"? If the worst comes to the worst, it is possible that so far from getting a republic, even the constitution we get will be the mere ghost of a constitution, something "*à la Shipov*,"**

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cites against the revolution all those elements of the people in general who are reactionary, ignorant or blinded by racial or religious hatred;

"The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. resolves to call on all Party organizations:

"a) while exposing the reactionary purpose of the government's concessions, to emphasize in their propaganda and agitation the fact that, on the one hand, these concessions were granted under compulsion, and, on the other, that it is absolutely impossible for the autocracy to grant reforms satisfactory to the proletariat;

"b) taking advantage of the election campaign, to explain to the workers the real significance of the government's measures and to show the necessity for the proletariat of the convocation by revolutionary means of a constituent assembly based on universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot;

"c) to organize the proletariat for the immediate realization, in a revolutionary way, of the eight-hour working day and of the other immediate demands of the working class;

"d) to organize armed resistance to the actions of the Black-Hundreds and generally of all the reactionary elements led by the government" (Author's note to the 1908 edition —*Ed.*)

* The newspaper *Vperyod*, published in Geneva, began to appear in January 1905 as the organ of the Bolshevik section of the Party. Eighteen issues appeared from January to May. After May, by virtue of the decision of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, the *Proletary* was issued in place of the *Vperyod* as the central organ of the R.S D L P. (This Congress took place in London in May; the Mensheviks did not appear, and organized their own "Conference" in Geneva.) (Author's note to the 1908 edition —*Ed.*)

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but would it be pardonable for a Social-Democrat to obscure our slogan calling for a republic?

Of course, the new *Iskra*-ites have not yet gone so far as to obscure it. But, as is particularly clearly evident from their resolution, to such an extent has the revolutionary spirit fled from them, to such an extent has lifeless pedantry blinded them to the militant tasks of the moment that, of all things, they *forgot* to mention a word about the republic in their resolutions. It is incredible, but it is a fact. All the slogans of Social-Democracy have been endorsed, repeated, explained and presented in detail in the various resolutions of the Conference—even the election of shop stewards and delegates by the workers has not been forgotten, but in a resolution on a provisional revolutionary government they simply did not find the occasion to mention the republic. To talk of the "victory" of the people's uprising, of the establishment of a provisional government, and not to indicate what relation these "steps" and acts have to the achievement of a republic—means writing a resolution not for the guidance of the proletarian struggle, but for the purpose of hobbling along at the tail end of the proletarian movement.

To sum up: the first part of the resolution 1) gives no explanation whatever of the role of a provisional revolutionary government from the standpoint of the struggle for a republic and of securing a genuinely popular and genuinely constituent assembly; 2) simply confuses the proletariat in its conceptions of democracy by placing on a par with a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism a state of affairs in which the main requisite for a real victory is lacking.

4. THE ABOLITION OF THE MONARCHIST SYSTEM AND A REPUBLIC

Let us pass on to the next section of the resolution:

> "... In either case such victory will inaugurate a new phase in the revolutionary epoch.
>
> "The task which the objective conditions of social development spontaneously raise in this new phase is the final abolition of the whole regime of social estates and the monarchy in the process of mutual struggle among the elements of politically emancipated bourgeois society for the satisfaction of their social interests and for the direct acquisition of power.
>
> "Therefore, the provisional government that would undertake to carry out the tasks of this revolution, which by its historical nature is a bourgeois revolution, would, in regulating the mutual struggle of the antagonistic classes of the emancipated nation, not only have to push revolutionary development further ahead but would also have to fight against those of its factors which threaten the foundations of the capitalist system."

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Let us examine this section which forms an independent part of the resolution. The idea underlying the above-quoted arguments coincides with that stated in the third clause of the Congress resolution. But in comparing these parts of the two resolutions, the following radical difference at once becomes apparent. The Congress resolution describes the social and economic basis of the revolution in a few words and, concentrating its entire attention on the sharply defined struggle of classes for definite gains, places the militant tasks of the proletariat in the forefront. The resolution of the Conference describes the social and economic basis of the revolution in a long-winded, nebulous and confused manner, very vaguely mentions the struggle for definite gains, and leaves the militant tasks of the proletariat altogether in the shade. The resolution of the Conference speaks of the abolition of the old order in the process of mutual struggle among the various elements of society. The Congress resolution states that we, the party of the proletariat, must effect this abolition, that only the establishment of a democratic republic signifies the real abolition of the old order, that we must achieve such a republic, that we shall fight for it and for complete liberty, not only against the autocracy, but also against the bourgeoisie, if it attempts (as it assuredly will) to wrest our gains from us. The Congress resolution calls on a definite class to wage a struggle for a precisely defined immediate aim. The resolution of the Conference discourses on the mutual struggle of various forces. One resolution expresses the psychology of active struggle, the other expresses that of passive contemplation; one resounds with the call for live action, the other is steeped in lifeless pedantry. Both resolutions state that the present revolution is only our first step, which will be followed by another; but from this, one resolution draws the conclusion that we must for that reason get over this step as quickly as possible, leave it behind as quickly as possible, achieve a republic, mercilessly crush the counter-revolution and prepare the ground for the second step. The other resolution, however, oozes, so to speak, with verbose descriptions of this first step and (excuse the vulgar expression) chews the cud over it. The resolution of the Congress takes the old and yet eternally new ideas of Marxism (about the bourgeois nature of a democratic revolution) as a preface or first premise from which it draws conclusions as to the progressive tasks of the most progressive class, which is fighting both for the democratic and for the Socialist revolution. The resolution of the Conference does not get beyond the preface, chewing it over and over again and trying to be clever about it.

This is the very distinction which has long been dividing the Russian Marxists into two wings: the pedantic and the militant wings in the old days of "legal Marxism," and the economic and political wings in the period of the newly arising mass movement. From the correct premise of Marxism concerning the deep economic roots of the class struggle in general and of the political struggle in particular, the Economists drew the singular conclusion that we must turn our backs on the political struggle and retard

its development, narrow its scope, and derogate from its aims. The political wing, on the contrary, drew a different conclusion from these same premises, namely, that the deeper the roots of our struggle at the present time, the more widely, the more boldly, and the more resolutely we must wage this struggle and the greater the initiative we must show in it. What we are now dealing with is the same old controversy, only under different circumstances and in a modified form. From the premises that a democratic revolution is far from being a Socialist one, that the propertyless are far from being the only ones to whom it is "of interest," that it is deeply rooted in the inexorable needs and requirements of the *whole* of bourgeois society—from these premises we draw the conclusion that the most progressive class must formulate its democratic aims all the more boldly, express them all the more sharply and fully, advance the direct slogan calling for a republic, popularize the idea of the necessity of a provisional revolutionary government and of the necessity of ruthlessly crushing counter-revolution. Our opponents, the new *Iskra*-ites however, deduce from the very same premises that the democratic conclusions should not be expressed fully, that the slogan calling for a republic may be omitted from the practical slogans, that we can refrain from popularizing the idea of the necessity of a provisional revolutionary government, that a mere decision to convene a constituent assembly can be termed a decisive victory, that we need not advance the task of combating counter-revolution as our active aim but that we may submerge it instead in a nebulous (and, as we shall presently see, wrongly formulated) reference to a "process of mutual struggle." This is not the language of political leaders, but of fossilized bureaucrats.

And the more closely one examines the various formulae in the new *Iskra*-ite resolution, the clearer its aforementioned basic features become. It speaks, for instance, of a "process of mutual struggle among the elements of politically emancipated bourgeois society." Bearing in mind the subject with which this resolution deals (a provisional revolutionary government) one asks in astonishment: if you are referring to the process of mutual struggle, how can you keep silent about the elements which are *enslaving* bourgeois society politically? Do the "Conferencers" really imagine that because they have assumed that the revolution will be victorious these elements have already disappeared? Such an idea would be absurd in general, and in particular would be an expression of the greatest political naiveté and political short-sightedness. After the victory of the revolution over the counter-revolution, the latter will not disappear, on the contrary, it will inevitably start a new and even more desperate struggle. Since the purpose of our resolution is to analyse the tasks that will confront us when the revolution is victorious, it is incumbent upon us to devote great attention to the tasks of repelling counter-revolutionary attacks (as is done in the resolution of the Congress), and not to submerge these immediate, urgent and vital political tasks of a militant party in general discussions on

what will happen *after* the present revolutionary period, what will happen when a "politically *emancipated* society" will already be in existence. Just as the Economists by repeating the truism that politics are subordinated to economics, covered up their failure to understand current political tasks, so the new *Iskra*-ites, by repeating the truism that struggles will take place in a politically *emancipated* society, cover up their failure to understand the urgent revolutionary tasks of the political *emancipation* of this society.

Take the expression "the final abolition of the whole regime of social estates and the monarchy." In plain language, the final abolition of the monarchist system means the establishment of a democratic republic. But our good Martynov and his admirers think that this expression is far too simple and clear. They are absolutely bent on rendering it "more profound" and saying it more "cleverly." As a result, we get ridiculous and vain efforts to appear profound, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, we get a description instead of a slogan, a sort of melancholy looking backward instead of a stirring appeal to march forward. We get the impression, not of virile people eager to fight for a republic here and now, but of fossilized mummies who *sub specie aeternitatis** consider the question from the standpoint of *plusquamperfectum*.**

Let us proceed further:

"... the provisional government ... would undertake to carry out the tasks of this ... bourgeois revolution...." Here we see at once the result of the fact that our "Conferenceers" have overlooked a concrete question which confronts the political leaders of the proletariat. The concrete question of a provisional revolutionary government faded from their field of vision before the question of the future series of governments which will carry out the aims of the bourgeois revolution in general. If you want to consider the question "from a historical angle," the example of any European country will show you that it was a series of governments, not by any means "provisional," that carried out the historical aims of the bourgeois revolution, that even the governments which defeated the revolution were nonetheless forced to carry out the historical aims of that defeated revolution. But what is called a "provisional revolutionary government" is something altogether different from what you are referring to: that is the name given to the government of a revolutionary epoch, which directly replaces the overthrown government *and which rests on the uprising of the people*, and not on representative institutions coming from the people. A provisional revolutionary government is the organ of struggle for the immediate victory of the revolution, for the immediate repulse of counter-revolutionary attempts, and not by any means an organ for carrying out the historical aims of the bourgeois revolution in general. We may, gentlemen, leave it to the future historians of the future *Russkaya Starina* to determine exactly

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** Pluperfect, the remote past.—*Ed.*

what aims of the bourgeois revolution you and we, or this or that government, shall have achieved—there will be time enough to do that in thirty years; now we must put forward slogans and give practical directives for the struggle for a republic and for the proletariat's most active participation in this struggle.

It is for the reasons stated that the last propositions in the section of the resolution which we have quoted above are also unsatisfactory. The expression that the provisional government would have to "regulate" the *mutual* struggle among the antagonistic classes is exceedingly inept, or at any rate awkwardly put; Marxists should not use such liberal, *Osvobozhdeniye* formulations, which lead one to believe that it is possible to have governments which do not serve as organs of the class struggle but as its "regulators".... The government would "not only have to push revolutionary development further ahead but would also have to fight against those of its factors which threaten the foundations of the capitalist system." But it is the proletariat, the very same in whose name the resolution is speaking, that constitutes this "factor"! Instead of indicating just how the proletariat should "push revolutionary development further ahead" at the present time (push it further than the constitutionalist bourgeois would care to go), instead of advice to prepare definite ways and means of combating the bourgeoisie when the latter turns against the conquests of the revolution, we are offered a general description of a process, which does not say a word about the concrete aims of *our* activity. The new *Iskra*-ite method of exposition reminds one of Marx's opinion (in his famous "theses" on Feuerbach) of the old materialism, which was alien to the ideas of dialectics. Marx said that the philosophers only *interpreted* the world in various ways, whereas the point is to *change* this world. Likewise, the new *Iskra*-ites can give a tolerable description and explanation of the process of struggle which is taking place before their eyes, but they are altogether incapable of giving a correct slogan for this struggle. They march with a will but lead badly, and they depreciate the materialist conception of history by ignoring the active, leading and guiding part in history which can and must be played by parties that understand the material prerequisites of a revolution and that have placed themselves at the head of the progressive classes.

5. HOW SHOULD "THE REVOLUTION BE PUSHED AHEAD"?

Let us quote the next section of the resolution:

> "Under such conditions, Social-Democracy must strive to maintain during the whole course of the revolution, a position which would best of all secure for it the possibility of pushing the revolution ahead, which would not tie the hands of Social-Democracy in its struggle against the inconsistent and self-seeking policy of the bourgeois par-

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"Under such conditions, Social-Democracy must strive to maintain during the whole course of the revolution, a position which would best of all secure for it the possibility of pushing the revolution ahead, which would not tie the hands of Social-Democracy in its struggle against the inconsistent and self-seeking policy of the bourgeois par-

Yes, such is the undoubted fact, which, we are sure, will serve as a landmark for the future historian of the Russian Social-Democratic movement. The Conference of Social-Democrats held in May 1905 passed a resolution which contains fine words about the necessity of pushing ahead the democratic revolution, but which actually pushes it back, which actually does not go beyond the democratic slogans of the monarchist bourgeoisie.

The new *Iskra*-ites like to accuse us of ignoring the danger of the proletariat merging in the democratic bourgeoisie. We should like to see the person who would undertake to prove this charge on the basis of the text of the resolutions passed by the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. Our reply to our opponents is: A Social-Democratic Party, operating in a bourgeois society, cannot take part in politics without marching, in one instance or another, *side by side* with the democratic bourgeoisie. The difference between us in this respect is that we march side by side with the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie, without merging with it, whereas you march side by side with the *liberal and monarchist bourgeoisie,* also without merging with it. *That is how matters stand.*

The tactical slogans you have formulated in the name of the Conference *coincide* with the slogans of the "Constitutional-Democratic" Party, *i.e.*, the *party of the monarchist bourgeoisie;* moreover, you did not even notice or realize this coincidence, thus actually *dragging in the wake of the Osvobozhdentsi.*

The tactical slogans we have formulated in the name of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party coincide with the slogans of the democratic-revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie. This bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie in Russia have not yet combined into a big people's party.*

However, only one utterly ignorant of what is now taking place in Russia can doubt the existence of the elements of such a party. We propose to lead (in the event that the course of the great Russian revolution is successful) not only the proletariat, organized by the Social-Democratic Party, but also this petty bourgeoisie, which is capable of marching side by side with us.

In its resolution the Conference unconsciously *descends* to the level of the liberal and monarchist buorgeoisie. The Party Congress in its resolution consciously *raises* to its own level those elements of the revolutionary democracy who are capable of waging a struggle, and not of acting as brokers. Such elements are to be found mostly among the peasants. In classifying the big social groups according to their political tendencies we can, without

* The "Socialist-Revolutionaries" are more in the nature of a terrorist group of intellectuals than the embryo of such a party, although objectively the activities of that group reduce themselves to this very matter of achieving the aims of the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie.

danger of serious error, identify revolutionary and republican democracy with the mass of the peasants—of course, in the same way and with the same reservations and implied conditions as we can identify the working class with Social-Democracy. In other words, we may formulate our conclusions in the following way as well: in a revolutionary period the Conference in its *national* political* slogans unconsciously *descends to the level of the mass of the landlords.* The Party Congress in its national political slogans *raises the peasant masses to the revolutionary level.* We challenge anyone who may accuse us of evincing a penchant for paradoxes because of this conclusion to refute the proposition that if we are not strong enough to bring the revolution to a successful conclusion, if the revolution *terminates* in a "decisive victory" in the sense understood by the *Osvobozhdentsi, i.e.,* exclusively in the form of a representative assembly convened by the tsar, which could be called a constituent assembly only in derision—that this will be a revolution in which the *landlord and big bourgeois* element will preponderate. On the other hand, if we are destined to live through a really great revolution, if history prevents a "miscarriage," this time, if we are strong enough to carry the revolution to the end, to a decisive victory, not in the *Osvobozhdeniye* or the new *Iskra* sense of the word, then it will be a revolution in which the peasant and proletarian element will preponderate.

Some people may, perhaps, interpret the fact that we admit such preponderance as a renunciation of the view that the impending revolution will be bourgeois in character. This is quite possible, considering how this concept is misused in the *Iskra*. For this reason it will not be at all superfluous to dwell on this question.

6. FROM WHAT DIRECTION IS THE PROLETARIAT THREATENED WITH THE DANGER OF HAVING ITS HANDS TIED IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE INCONSISTENT BOURGEOISIE?

Marxists are absolutely convinced of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does this mean? It means that the democratic changes in the political system and the social and economic changes, which have become indispensable for Russia, do not in themselves imply the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of bourgeois domination; on the contrary, they will, for the first time, really clear the ground for a widespread and rapid European, and not Asiatic, development of capitalism; they will, for the first time, make it possible for the bourgeoisie to rule as a class. The Socialist-Revolutionaries cannot grasp this idea, for they are ignorant of the rudiments of the laws of development of commodity and

* We are not referring here to the special peasant slogans which were dealt with in separate resolutions.

capitalist production; they fail to see that even the complete success of a peasant uprising, even the redistribution of the whole of the land for the benefit of the peasants and in accordance with their desires ("Black Redistribution" or something of that kind), will not destroy capitalism at all, but will, on the contrary, give an impetus to its development and hasten the breaking up of the peasantry itself into classes. The failure to grasp this truth makes the Socialist-Revolutionaries unconscious ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie. Insistence on this truth is extremely important for Social-Democrats, not only theoretically but from the standpoint of practical politics, for from it follows the necessity for the complete class independence of the party of the proletariat in the present "general democratic" movement.

But it does not at all follow from this that a *democratic* revolution (bourgeois in its social and economic substance) is not of *enormous* interest for the proletariat. It does not at all follow from this that the democratic revolution cannot take place in a form advantageous mainly to the big capitalist, the financial magnate and the "enlightened" landlord, as well as in a form advantageous to the peasant and to the worker.

The new *Iskra*-ites thoroughly misunderstand the meaning and significance of the concept bourgeois revolution. Their arguments constantly reveal the underlying idea that a bourgeois revolution is a revolution which can be of benefit only to the bourgeoisie. And yet nothing is more erroneous than such an idea. A bourgeois revolution is a revolution which does not go beyond the limits of the bourgeois, *i.e.*, capitalist, social and economic system. A bourgeois revolution expresses the needs of capitalist development, and far from destroying the foundations of captalism, it does the opposite, it broadens and strengthens them. This revolution therefore expresses the interests not only of the working class, but of the entire bourgeoisie as well. Since the domination of the bourgeoisie over the working class is inevitable under capitalism, it is quite correct to say that a bourgeois revolution expresses the interests not so much of the proletariat as of the bourgeoisie. But it is entirely absurd to think that a bourgeois revolution does not express the interests of the proletariat altogether. This absurd idea boils down either to the hoary Narodnik theory that a bourgeois revolution runs counter to the interests of the proletariat, and that therefore we have no need for bourgeois political liberty; or to anarchism, which rejects all participation of the proletariat in bourgeois politics, in a bourgeois revolution and in bourgeois parliamentarism. From the standpoint of theory, this idea disregards the elementary propositions of Marxism concerning the inevitability of capitalist development where commodity production exists. Marxism teaches that a society which is based on commodity production, and which has commercial intercourse with civilized capitalist nations, itself inevitably takes the road of capitalism at a certain stage of its development. Marxism has irrevocably broken with the ravings of the Narodniks and the anarchists to the effect that Russia, for instance, can avoid capitalist devel-

opment, jump out of capitalism, or skip over it, along some path other than the path of the class struggle on the basis and within the framework of this same capitalism.

All these principles of Marxism have been proved and explained over and over again in minute detail in general and with regard to Russia in particular. And from these principles it follows that the idea of seeking salvation for the working class in anything save the further development of capitalism is *reactionary*. In countries like Russia, the working class suffers not so much from capitalism as from the insufficient development of capitalism. The working class is therefore *decidedly interested* in the broadest, freest and most rapid development of capitalism. The removal *of all the remnants of the old order which are hampering the broad, free* and rapid development of capitalism is of decided *advantage* to the working class. The bourgeois revolution is precisely a revolution which most resolutely sweeps away the survivals of the past, the remnants of serfdom (which include not only autocracy but monarchy as well) and which most fully guarantees the broadest, freest and most rapid development of capitalism.

That is why a *bourgeois* revolution is *in the highest degree advantageous to the proletariat*. A bourgeois revolution is *absolutely* necessary in the interests of the proletariat. The more complete, determined and consistent the bourgeois revolution, the more assured will be the proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie for Socialism. Such a conclusion will appear new, or strange and paradoxical only to those who are ignorant of the rudiments of scientific Socialism. And from this conclusion, among other things, follows the thesis that, *in a certain sense*, a bourgeois revolution is *more advantageous* to the proletariat than to the bourgeoisie. This thesis is unquestionably correct in the following sense: it is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie to rely on certain remnants of the past as against the proletariat, for instance, on the monarchy, the standing army, etc. It is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie if the bourgeois revolution does not too resolutely sweep away all the remnants of the past, but leaves some of them, *i.e.*, if this revolution is not fully consistent, if it is not complete and if it is not determined and relentless. Social-Democrats often express this idea somewhat differently by stating that the bourgeoisie betrays its own self, that the bourgeoisie betrays the cause of liberty, that the bourgeoisie is incapable of being consistently democratic. It is of greater advantage to the bourgeoisie if the necessary changes in the direction of bourgeois democracy take place more slowly, more gradually, more cautiously, less resolutely, by means of reforms and not by means of revolution; if these changes spare the "venerable" institutions of serfdom (such as the monarchy) as much as possible; if these changes develop as little as possible the independent revolutionary activity, initiative and energy of the common people, *i.e.*, the peasantry and especially the workers, for otherwise it will be easier for the workers, as the French say, "to hitch the rifle from one shoulder to

the other," *i.e.*, to turn against the bourgeoisie the guns which the bourgeois revolution will place in their hands, the liberty which the revolution will bring, the democratic institutions which will spring up on the ground that is cleared of serfdom.

On the other hand, it is more advantageous for the working class if the necessary changes in the direction of bourgeois democracy take place by way of revolution and not by way of reform; for the way of reform is the way of delay, of procrastination, of the painfully slow decomposition of the putrid parts of the national organism. It is the proletariat and the peasantry that suffer first of all and most of all from this putrefaction. The revolutionary way is the way of quick amputation, which is the least painful to the proletariat, the way of the direct removal of the decomposing parts, the way of fewest concessions to and least consideration for the monarchy and the disgusting, vile, rotten and contaminating institutions which go with it.

So it is not only because of the censorship, not only for fear of the authorities that our bourgeois-liberal press deplores the possibility of a revolutionary way, is afraid of revolution, tries to frighten the tsar with the bogey of revolution, is anxious to avoid revolution, grovels and toadies for the sake of miserable reforms as a basis for a reformist way. This standpoint is shared not only by the *Russkiye Vyedomosti*, *Syn Otechestva*, *Nasha Zhizn* and *Nashi Dni*,* but also by the illegal, uncensored *Osvobozhdeniye*. The very position the bourgeoisie occupies as a class in capitalist society inevitably causes it to be inconsistent in the democratic revolution. The very position the proletariat occupies as a class compels it to be consistently democratic. The bourgeoisie looks backward, fearing democratic progress, which threatens to strengthen the proletariat. The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains, but with the help of democracy it has the whole world to gain. That is why the more consistent the bourgeois revolution is in its democratic changes, the less it will limit itself to what is of advantage exclusively to the bourgeoisie. The more consistent the bourgeois revolution is, the greater the guarantees of the benefits that the proletariat and the peasantry will derive from the democratic revolution.

Marxism teaches the proletarian not to keep aloof from the bourgeois revolution, not to be indifferent to it, not to allow the leadership of the revolution to be assumed by the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, to take a most energetic part in it, to fight most resolutely for consistent proletarian democracy, for carrying the revolution to its conclusion. We cannot jump out of the bourgeois-democratic confines of the Russian revolution, but we can vastly extend its boundaries, and within those boundaries we can and must fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for the conditions that will make it possible to prepare its forces for the

* *Russkiye Vyedomosti (Russian Journal)*, *Syn Otechestva (Son of the Fatherland)*, *Nasha Zhizn (Our Life)* and *Nashi Dni (Our Days)*—newspapers published by the bourgeois liberal party.—*Ed.*

complete victory that is to come. There are different kinds of bourgeois democrats. The Monarchist-Zemstvo-ist, who favours an upper chamber, and who "asks" for universal suffrage while secretly, *sub rosa*, striking a bargain with tsarism for a curtailed constitution, is also a bourgeois-democrat. And the peasant who is fighting, arms in hand, against the landlords and the government officials and with a "naive republicanism" proposes to "kick out the tsar"* is also a bourgeois-democrat. There are bourgeois-democratic regimes like the one in Germany and also like the one in England, like the one in Austria and also like the ones in America or Switzerland. He would be a fine Marxist indeed, who in a period of democratic revolution failed to see the difference between the degrees of democracy, the difference in the natures of its various forms and confined himself to "smart" sophisms to the effect that, after all, this is "a bourgeois revolution" and the fruits of a "bourgeois revolution."

Our new *Iskra*-ites are wiseacres of just this sort, who take pride in their short-sightedness. They confine themselves to disquisitions on the bourgeois nature of the revolution just when and where it is necessary to be able to draw a distinction between republican-revolutionary and monarchist-liberal bourgeois democrats, to say nothing of the distinction between inconsistent bourgeois democratism and consistent proletarian democratism. They are satisfied—as if they had really become like the "man in the muffler"**—to converse dolefully about a "process of mutual struggle of antagonistic classes," when the question is one of giving *democratic leadership* in the present revolution, of laying stress on *progressive democratic* slogans as distinguished from the treacherous slogans of Mr. Struve and Co., of bluntly and straightforwardly stating the immediate aims of the really revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry, as distinguished from the liberal haggling of the landlords and manufacturers. At the present time the substance of the question, which you, gentlemen, have missed, is whether our revolution will result in a real, great victory, or merely in a wretched deal, whether it will go so far as the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, or whether it will "peter out" in a liberal constitution *à la* Shipov.

At first sight it might appear that in raising the question we are deviating entirely from our subject. But it is only at first sight that this may appear to be so. As a matter of fact, it is precisely this question that is at the root of the difference in principle which has already become clearly marked between the Social-Democratic tactics of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and the tactics initiated by the Conference of the new *Iskra*-ites. The latter have already taken not two but three steps

* See the *Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 71, page 337, footnote 2.

** *The "man in the muffler"*—a narrow-minded, hide-bound conservative who stubbornly persists in shutting his eyes to the actual conditions of life. A character depicted in a story under the same title by A. Chekhov.—*Ed.*

back, resurrecting the mistakes of Economism in solving problems that are incomparably more complex, more important and more vital to the workers' party, *viz.*, questions of its tactics in time of revolution. That is why we must analyse the question we have raised with all due attention.

The section of the new *Iskra*-ite resolution which we have quoted above points out the danger of Social-Democracy tying its hands in the struggle against the inconsistent policy of the bourgeoisie, the danger of its becoming merged in bourgeois democracy. The idea of this danger runs like a thread through all the literature typical of the new *Iskra*, it is the real crux of the principle involved in our Party split (ever since the time the elements of squabbling in this split were wholly eclipsed by the elements of a turn towards Economism). And without any equivocation we admit that this danger really exists, that just at the present time, at the height of the Russian revolution, this danger has become particularly serious. The pressing and extremely responsible duty of finding out *from which side* this danger actually threatens devolves on all of us theoreticians or—as I should prefer to say of myself—publicists of Social-Democracy. For the source of our disagreement is not a dispute as to whether such a danger exists, but the dispute as to whether it is caused by the so-called *khvostism* of the "Minority" or the so-called revolutionism of the "Majority."

To obviate all misinterpretations and misunderstandings, let us first of all note that the danger to which we are referring lies not in the subjective, but in the objective aspect of the matter, not in the formal position which Social-Democracy will take in the struggle, but in the material outcome of the entire present revolutionary struggle. The question is not whether this or that Social-Democratic group will want to merge in bourgeois-democracy or whether they are conscious of the fact that they are about to be merged. Nobody suggests that. We do not suspect any Social-Democrat of harbouring such a desire, and this is not at all a question of desires. Nor is it a question of whether this or that Social-Democratic group will preserve its formal identity, its diversity from and independence of bourgeois-democracy throughout the course of the revolution. They may not only proclaim such "independence" but even retain it formally, and yet *it may turn out* that their hands will nonetheless be tied in the struggle against the inconsistency of the bourgeoisie. The final political result of the revolution may be that, in spite of the formal "independence" of Social-Democracy, in spite of its complete organizational independence as a separate party, it will in fact no longer be independent, it will not be able to put the imprint of its proletarian independence on the course of events, will prove so weak that, on the whole and in the last analysis, its "merging" in bourgeois-democracy will nonetheless be a historical fact.

That is what constitutes the real danger. Now let us see where the threat comes from: from the fact that Social-Democracy as represented by the new *Iskra* is deviating to the Right—as we believe; or from the fact that Social-

Democracy as represented by the "Majority," the *Vperyod*, etc., is deviating to the Left—as the new *Iskra*-ites believe.

The answer to this question, as we have pointed out, depends on the objective combination of the actions of the various social forces. Our Marxian analysis of Russian life has given us a theoretical insight into the nature of those forces; now their nature is being revealed in practice by the open action of groups and classes in the course of the revolution. Thus, the entire theoretical analysis made by the Marxists long before the period we are now passing through, as well as all the practical observations of the development of revolutionary events, shows that from the standpoint of objective conditions there are two possible alternatives for the course and outcome of the revolution in Russia. A change in the economic and political system in Russia along bourgeois-democratic lines is inevitable and unavoidable. There is no power on earth that can prevent such a change. But the combined actions of the existing forces which are effecting that change may result in one of two alternatives, may bring about one of two alternative forms of that change. Either 1) the result will be a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism," or 2) the forces will be inadequate for a decisive victory and the matter will end in a deal between tsarism and the most "inconsistent" and most "self-seeking" elements of the bourgeoisie. All the infinite variety of detail and combinations, which no one is able to foresee, reduce themselves—in general and on the whole—to either the one or the other of these two outcomes.

Let us now consider these outcomes, first, from the standpoint of their social significance and, secondly, from the standpoint of the position of Social-Democracy (its "merging" or "having its hands tied") in one or the other case.

What is a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism"? We have already seen that in using this expression the new *Iskra*-ites do not grasp even its immediate political significance. Still less do they seem to understand the class essence of this concept. Surely we Marxists must in no way allow ourselves to be deluded by *words*, such as "revolution" or "the great Russian revolution," as do many revolutionary democrats (of the type of Gapon). We must be perfectly clear in our own minds as to what real social forces are opposed to "tsarism" (which is a real force, perfectly intelligible to all) and are capable of gaining a "decisive victory" over it. Such a force cannot be the big bourgeoisie, the landlords, the manufacturers, the kind of "society" which follows the lead of the *Osvobozhdentsi*. We see that these do not even want a decisive victory. We know that owing to their class position they are incapable of waging a decisive struggle against tsarism; they are too greatly handicapped by the shackles of private property, capital and land to enter into a decisive struggle. They need tsarism with its bureaucratic, police and military forces against the proletariat and the peasantry far too much for them to be able to strive for its destruction. No, the only force capable of gaining "a decisive victory over tsarism," is

the *people, i.e.*, the proletariat and the peasantry, if we take the main, big forces and distribute the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie (also part of "the people") between the two. "A decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism" is the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*. Our new *Iskra*-ites cannot escape from this conclusion, which *Vperyod* pointed out long ago. There is no one else who is capable of gaining a decisive victory over tsarism.

And such a victory will be precisely a dictatorship, *i.e.*, it must inevitably rely on military force, on the arming of the masses, on an uprising, and not on institutions of one kind or another, established in a "lawful" or "peaceful" way. It can be only a dictatorship, for the realization of the changes which are urgently and absolutely indispensable for the proletariat and the peasantry will call forth the desperate resistance of the landlords, of the big bourgeoisie and of tsarism. Without a dictatorship it is impossible to break down that resistance and to repel the counter-revolutionary attempts. But of course it will be a democratic, not a Socialist dictatorship. It will not be able (without a series of intermediary stages of revolutionary development) to affect the foundations of capitalism. At best it may bring about a radical redistribution of landed property in favour of the peasantry, establish consistent and full democracy including the formation of a republic, eradicate all the oppressive features of Asiatic bondage, not only in village but also in factory life, lay the foundation for a thorough improvement in the position of the workers and for a rise in their standard of living, and—last but not least*—carry the revolutionary conflagration into Europe. Such a victory will by no means as yet transform our bourgeois revolution into a Socialist revolution; the democratic revolution will not directly overstep the bounds of bourgeois social and economic relationships; nevertheless, the significance of such a victory for the future development of Russia and of the whole world will be immense. Nothing will raise the revolutionary energy of the world proletariat so much, nothing will shorten the path leading to its complete victory to such an extent, as this decisive victory of the revolution that has now started in Russia.

How probable such a victory is, is another question. We are not in the least inclined to be unreasonably optimistic on that score, we do not for a moment forget the immense difficulties of this task, but since we are out to fight we must desire victory and be able to point out the right road to it. Tendencies capable of leading to such a victory undoubtedly exist. True, our, Social-Democratic, influence on the masses of the proletariat is as yet exceedingly inadequate; the revolutionary influence on the mass of the peasantry is altogether insignificant; the proletariat, and especially the peasantry, are still frightfully scattered, backward and ignorant. But revolution consolidates and enlightens rapidly. Every step in the development

* "Last but not least" in English in the Russian text.—*Ed.*

of the revolution rouses the masses and attracts them with irresistible force to the side of the revolutionary program, as the only program that fully and consistently expresses their real and vital interests.

According to a law of mechanics, every action produces an equal reaction. In history also the destructive force of a revolution is to a considerable extent dependent on how strong and protracted was the suppression of the striving for liberty, and how profound is the contradiction between the antediluvian "superstructure" and the living force of the present epoch. The international political situation, too, is in many respects shaping itself in a way most advantageous for the Russian revolution. The uprising of the workers and peasants has already started; it is sporadic, spontaneous, weak, but it unquestionably and undoubtedly proves the existence of forces capable of waging a decisive struggle and marching towards a decisive victory.

If these forces prove inadequate, tsarism will have time to conclude the deal which is already in preparation by Messieurs the Bulygins on the one side, and Messieurs the Struves, on the other. Then the whole thing will end in a curtailed constitution, or, if the worst comes to the worst, even in a travesty of a constitution. This will also be a "bourgeois revolution," but it will be an abortive, miscarried, half-baked revolution. Social-Democracy entertains no illusions on that score, it knows the treacherous nature of the bourgeoisie, it will not lose heart or abandon its persistent, patient, sustained work of educating the proletariat in the spirit of class consciousness even in the most uninspiring, humdrum days of bourgeois-constitutional "Shipóv" bliss. *Such an outcome would be more or less similar to the* outcome of almost all the democratic revolutions in Europe during the nineteenth century, and our Party development would then proceed along a thorny, hard and long, but familiar and beaten trail.

The *question now arises: in which of these two possible outcomes* will Social-Democracy find its hands actually tied in the fight against the inconsistent and self-seeking bourgeoisie, find itself actually "merged," or almost so, in bourgeois democracy?

We need only put this question clearly to have no difficulty in answering it without a moment's hesitation.

If the bourgeoisie succeeds in frustrating the Russian revolution by coming to terms with tsarism, Social-Democracy will find its hands actually tied in the fight against the inconsistent bourgeoisie; Social-Democracy will find itself merged "in bourgeois democracy" in the sense that the proletariat will not succeed in putting its clear imprint on the revolution, will not succeed in settling assounts with tsarism in proletarian or, as Marx used to say, "in plebeian" fashion.

If the revolution gains a decisive victory—then we shall settle accounts with tsarism in the Jacobin, or, if you like, in the plebeian way. "The terror in France," wrote Marx in 1848 in the famous *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, "was nothing but a plebeian way of settling accounts with the enemies of the bourgeoisie: absolutism, feudalism and philistinism." (See Marx, *Nach-*

lass, Mehring's edition, Vol. III, p. 211.) Have those people who, in a period of a democratic revolution, try to frighten the Social-Democratic workers in Russia with the bogey of "Jacobinism" ever stopped to think of the significance of these words of Marx?

The Girondists of contemporary Russian Social-Democracy, the new *Iskra*-ites, do not merge with the *Osvobozhdentsi*, but in point of fact they follow, by reason of the nature of their slogans, in the wake of the latter. And the *Osvobozhdentsi*, *i.e.*, the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie, wish to settle accounts with the autocracy gently, as befits reformers, in a yielding manner, so as not to offend the aristocracy, the nobles, the court—cautiously, without breaking anything—kindly and politely, as befits gentlemen in white gloves (like the ones Mr. Petrunkevich borrowed from a bashi-bazouk to wear at the reception of "representatives of the people" (?) held by Nicholas the Bloody. See *Proletary*, No. 5.*

The Jacobins of contemporary Social-Democracy—the Bolsheviks, the adherents of the *Vperyod* (*Vperyodovtsi*), the Congress people (*Syezdovtsi*), or adherents of the *Proletary* (*Proletartsi*),** or whatever we may call them—wish by their slogans to inspire the revolutionary and republican petty bourgeoisie, and especially the peasantry, to rise to the level of the consistent democratism of the proletariat, which fully retains its individuality as a class. They want the people, *i.e.*, the proletariat and the peasantry, to settle accounts with the monarchy and the aristocracy in a "plebeian way," ruthlessly destroying the enemies of liberty, crushing their resistance by force, making no concessions whatever to the accursed heritage of serfdom, of Asiatic barbarism and of all that is an insult to mankind.

This, of course, does not mean that we necessarily propose to imitate the Jacobins in 1793, to adopt their views, program, slogans and methods of action. Nothing of the kind. Our program is not an old one, it is a new one—the minimum program of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. We have a new slogan: the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. We shall also have, if we live to see a real victory of the revolution, new methods of action, concordant with the nature and aims of the working-class Party that is striving for a complete Socialist revolution. By our comparison we merely want to explain that the representatives of the progressive class of the twentieth century, of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the Social-Democrats, are divided into two wings (the opportunist and the revolutionary) similar to those into which the repre-

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* Lenin refers to an episode which occurred in June 1905, when a delegation of *Zemstvo* representatives called on Nicholas II. In the last moment, just before the tsar appeared, it was noticed that the liberal Petrunkevich had no white gloves on and one of the colonels of the tsar's bodyguard gave Petrunkevich his gloves.—*Ed.*

** *Vperyodovtsi*, *Syezdovtsi*, *Proletartsi* are all meant to designate the Bolsheviks and refer to the newspaper *Vperyod (Forward)* published by the Bolsheviks, to the Third Party Congress convened by them, and to the paper *Proletary*, published by decision of the Third Party Congress beginning with May, 1905.—*Ed.*

sentatives of the progressive class of the eighteenth century, the bourgeoisie, were divided, *i.e.*, the Girondists and the Jacobins.

Only in the event of a complete victory of the democratic revolution will the proletariat have its hands free in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie, only in that event will it not become "merged" in bourgeois democracy, but will leave its proletarian or rather proletarian-peasant imprint on the whole revolution.

In a word, in order that it may not find itself with its hands tied in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeois democrats, the proletariat must be sufficiently class-conscious and strong to rouse the peasantry to revolutionary consciousness, to direct its attack, and thereby to pursue the line of consistent proletarian democratism independently.

That is how matters stand with regard to the question of the danger of having our hands tied in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie—a question so unsatisfactorily answered by the new *Iskra*-ites. The bourgeoisie will always be inconsistent. There is nothing more naive and futile than attempts to set forth conditions and points,* which if satisfied, would enable us to consider the bourgeois democrat a sincere friend of the people. Only the proletariat can be a consistent fighter for democracy. It may become a victorious fighter for democracy only if the peasant masses join its revolutionary struggle. If the proletariat is not strong enough for this, the bourgeoisie will be at the head of the democratic revolution and will impart to it an inconsistent and self-seeking nature. Nothing short of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry can prevent this.

Thus, we arrive at the undoubted conclusion that it is precisely the new *Iskra*-ite tactics, by reason of their objective significance, that are *playing into the hands of the bourgeois democrats.* Preaching organizational diffusiveness, to the extent of advocating plebiscites, advocating the principle of compromise and the divorcement of Party literature from the Party, derogating from the aims of armed insurrection, confusing the popular political slogans of the revolutionary proletariat with those of the monarchist bourgeoisie, distorting the requisites for a "decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism"—all this taken together constitutes that very policy of *khvostism* in a revolutionary period which perplexes the proletariat, disorganizes it, confuses its understanding and derogates from the tactics of Social-Democracy, instead of pointing out the only way to victory and of rallying all the revolutionary and republican elements of the people to the slogan of the proletariat.

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In order to confirm this conclusion at which we have arrived on the basis of our analysis of the resolution, let us approach this same question from

* As was attempted by Starovyer in his resolution, annulled by the Third Congress, and as is attempted by the Conference in an equally bungled resolution.

other angles. Let us see, first, how a simple and outspoken Menshevik illustrates the new *Iskra* tactics in the Georgian *Social-Democrat*. And, secondly, let us see who is actually making use of the new *Iskra* slogans in the present political situation.

7. THE TACTICS OF "ELIMINATING THE CONSERVATIVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT"

The article in the organ of the Tiflis Menshevik "Committee" (*Social-Democrat*, No. 1) to which we have just referred is entitled "The *Zemsky Sobor* and Our Tactics." Its author has not yet entirely forgotten our program; he advances the slogan of a republic, but this is how he discusses tactics:

> "It is possible to point out two ways of achieving this goal (a republic): either completely to ignore the *Zemsky Sobor* convened by the government and to defeat the government by force of arms, form a revolutionary government and convene a constituent assembly, or to declare the *Zemsky Sobor* the centre of our actions, influencing its composition and activity by force of arms and either forcibly compelling it to declare itself a constituent assembly or convening a constituent assembly through it. These two tactics differ from one another to a very marked degree. Let us see which of the two is more advantageous to us."

This is how the Russian new *Iskra*-ites set forth the ideas which were subsequently incorporated in the resolution we have analysed. Note that this was written before the battle of Tsushima,* when the Bulygin "scheme" had not yet seen the light of day. Even the liberals were losing their patience and were expressing their lack of confidence in the pages of the legal press; but a new *Iskra*-ite Social-Democrat proved more credulous than the liberals. He declares that the *Zemsky Sobor* "is being convened" and trusts the tsar to such an extent that he proposes to make this as yet non-existent *Zemsky Sobor* (or, possibly, "State Duma" or "Advisory Legislative Assembly"?) the centre of our actions. Being more outspoken and straightforward than the authors of the resolution adopted at the conference, our Tiflisian does not put the two "tactics" (which he expounds with inimitable naiveté) on a par, but declares that the second is more "advantageous." Just listen:

> "The first tactics. As you know, the coming revolution is a bourgeois revolution, *i.e.*, its purpose is to effect such changes in the

* *Tsushima*—the naval battle between a Russian squadron and the Japanese fleet (May 27-28, 1905) off Tsushima Island (Korea Strait) which ended in the utter defeat of the former.—*Ed.*

present system as are of interest not only to the proletariat but to the whole of bourgeois society. All classes are opposed to the government, even the capitalists themselves. The militant proletariat and the militant bourgeoisie are in a certain sense marching together and jointly attacking the autocracy from different sides. The government is completely isolated and lacks public sympathy. For this reason it is very easy to destroy it. The whole of the Russian proletariat is not yet sufficiently class-conscious and organized to be able to carry out the revolution by itself. And even if it were able to do so, it would carry through a proletarian (Socialist) revolution and not a bourgeois revolution. Hence, it is in our interests that the government remain without allies, that it be unable to disunite the opposition, ally the bourgeoisie to itself and leave the proletariat isolated...."

So, it is in the interests of the proletariat that the tsarist government shall not be able to disunite the bourgeoisie and the proletariat! Is it not by mistake that this Georgian organ is called *Social-Democrat* instead of being called the *Osvobozhdeniye*? And note the peerless philosophy with regard to a democratic revolution! Is it not obvious that this poor Tiflisian is hopelessly confused by the pedantic, *khvostist* interpretation of the concept "bourgeois revolution"? He discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic revolution and *forgets*... forgets about a trifle... about the peasantry! Of the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and favours the landowning Zemstvo-ists and is not aware of the peasants. And this in the Caucasus! Well, were we not right when we said that by its method of reasoning the new *Iskra* was sinking to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie instead of raising the revolutionary peasantry to the position of an ally?

"... Otherwise the defeat of the proletariat and the victory of the government are inevitable. This is just what the autocracy is striving for. In its *Zemsky Sobor* it will undoubtedly attract to its side the representatives of the nobility, of the Zemstvos, the city Dumas, the universities and similar bourgeois institutions. It will try to appease them with petty concessions, thereby reconciling them to itself. Strengthened in this way, it will direct all its blows against the working people who will have been isolated. It is our duty to prevent such an unfortunate outcome. But can this be done by the first method? Let us assume that we paid no attention whatever to the *Zemsky Sobor*, but started to prepare for insurrection ourselves, and one fine day came out on the streets armed and ready for battle. The result would be that we would be confronted not with one but with two enemies: the government and the *Zemsky Sobor*. While we would be preparing, they would have had time to come to terms, to enter into an agreement with one another, to draw up a constitution advantageous to themselves, and to divide power between them. These tactics are of direct

advantage to the government, and we must reject them in no uncertain fashion...."

Now this is frank! We must resolutely reject the "tactics" of preparing an uprising because the government "would have had time" to come to terms with the bourgeoisie! Can one find in the old literature of the most rabid "Economism" anything that would even approximate such a disgrace to revolutionary Social-Democracy? That uprisings and outbreaks of workers and peasants are taking place here and there is a fact. The *Zemsky Sobor* is a Bulygin promise. And the *Social-Democrat* in the city of Tiflis decides: to reject the tactics of preparing an uprising and to wait for a "centre of influence"—the *Zemsky Sobor*....

"...The second tactics, on the contrary, consist in placing the *Zemsky Sabor* under our surveillance, in not giving it the opportunity of acting according to its own will and entering into an agreement with the government.*

"We support the *Zemsky Sobor* to the extent that it fights the autocracy, and we fight against it in all cases of reconciliation with the autocracy on its part. By energetic interference and force we shall cause a split among the deputies,** rally the radicals to our side, eliminate the conservatives from the government and thus put the whole *Zemsky Sobor* on the path of revolution. Thanks to such tactics the government will always remain isolated, the opposition strong and thereby the establishment of a democratic system will be facilitated."

Well, well! Let anyone now say that we exaggerate the new *Iskra*-ites' turn to the most vulgar semblance of Economism. This is positively like the famous powder for exterminating flies: you catch the fly, sprinkle it with the powder and the fly will die. Split the deputies of the *Zemsky Sobor* by *force*, "eliminate the conservatives from the government"—and the *whole Zemsky Sobor* will take *the path of revolution*.... No "Jacobin" armed uprising of any sort, but just like that, in genteel, almost parliamentary fashion, "influencing" *the members of the Zemsky Sobor*.

Poor Russia! It has been said of her that she always wears the outmoded bonnets that Europe discards. We have no parliament as yet, even Bulygin has not yet promised one, but there is parliamentary cretinism galore.

"...How should this interference be effected? First of all, we shall demand that the *Zemsky Sobor* be convened on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot. Simultaneously

* By what means can the Zemstvo-ists be deprived of their own will? Perhaps by the use of a special sort of litmus paper ?

** Heavens! This is certainly rendering tactics "profound"! There are no forces available to fight in the streets, but it is possible "to split the deputies" "by force." Listen, comrade from Tiflis, one may prevaricate, but one should know the limit....

with the announcement* of this method of election, complete freedom to carry on the election campaign, *i.e.*, freedom of assembly, of speech and of the press, the inviolability of the voters and those elected and the release of all political prisoners must be made law.** The elections themselves must be fixed as late as possible so that we have sufficient time to inform and prepare the people. And since the drafting of the regulations governing the convocation of the *Sobor* has been entrusted to a commission headed by Bulygin, Minister of the Interior, we should also exert pressure on this commission and on its members.*** If the Bulygin Commission refused to satisfy our demands**** and grants suffrage only to property owners, then we must interfere in these elections and, by revolutionary means, force the voters to elect progressive candidates and to demand a constituent assembly in the *Zemsky Sobor*. Finally, we must impel the *Zemsky Sobor* to convene a constituent assembly or to declare itself to be such, *resorting to all possible measures for this purpose: demonstrations*, strikes, and, if need be, insurrection. The armed proletariat must constitute itself the defender of the constituent assembly, and both together***** will march forward to a democratic republic.

"Such are the Social-Democratic tactics, and they alone will secure us victory."

Let not the reader imagine that this incredible rubbish is simply a maiden attempt at writing on the part of some new *Iskra*-adherent who has no authority and no influence. No, this is what is stated in the *organ* of an entire committee of new *Iskra*-ites, the Tiflis Committee. More than that. This rubbish has been *openly endorsed by the "Iskra"* in No. 100 of which we read the following about that issue of the *Social-Democrat:*

> *"The first issue is edited in a lively and competent manner. The experienced hand of a capable editor and publicist is perceptible.... It may be said with all confidence that the newspaper will carry out the task it has set itself brilliantly."*

Yes! If that task is clearly to show one and all the utter ideological bankruptcy of new *Iskra*-ism, then it has indeed been carried out "brilliantly." No one could have expressed the new *Iskra*-ites' degradation to liberal bourgeois opportunism in a more "lively, competent and capable" manner.

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* In *Iskra?*

** By Nicholas?

*** So this is what is meant by the tactics of "eliminating the conservatives from the government"!

**** *But surely such a thing cannot happen if we follow these correct and profound tactics!*

***** Both the armed proletariat and the conservatives "eliminated from the government"?

8. *OSVOBOZHDENIYE*-ISM AND NEW *ISKRA*-ISM

Let us now proceed to another graphic confirmation of the political meaning of new *Iskra*-ism.

In a splendid, remarkable and most instructive article, entitled "How To Find Oneself" (*Osvobozhdeniye*, No. 71), Mr. Struve wages war against the "programmatic revolutionism" of our extreme parties. Mr. Struve is particularly displeased with me personally.* As for myself, Mr. Struve could not please me more: I could not wish for a better ally in the fight against the reviving Economism of the new *Iskra*-ites and the utter lack of principles displayed by the "Socialist-Revolutionaries." On some other occasion we shall relate how Mr. Struve and the *Osvobozhdeniye* proved in practice how utterly reactionary are the "amendments" to Marxism made in the draft program of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. We have already repeatedly spoken about how Mr. Struve rendered me honest, faithful and real service every time he approved of the new *Iskra*-ites *in principle*,** and we shall say so once more now.

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* "In comparison with the revolutionism of Messrs. Lenin and associates, the revolutionism of the West European Social-Democracy of Bebel, and even of Kautsky, is opportunism; but the foundations of even this already toned down revolutionism have been undermined and washed away by history." A most irate thrust. Only Mr. Struve is mistaken in thinking that it is possible to pile everything on me, as if I were dead. It is sufficient for me to make a challenge to Mr. Struve, which he will never be able to accept. When and where did I call the revolutionism of Bebel and Kautsky "opportunism"? When and where did I ever claim to have created any sort of special trend in international Social-Democracy *not identical* with the trend of Bebel and Kautsky? When and where have there been manifest differences between me, on the one hand, and Bebel and Kautsky on the other—differences even slightly approximating in seriousness the differences between Bebel and Kautsky, for instance, in Breslau on the agrarian question? Let Mr. Struve try to answer these three questions.

And to our readers we say: The liberal bourgeoisie *everywhere* and *always* has recourse to the method of assuring its adherents in a given country that the Social-Democrats of that country are the most unreasonable, whereas their comrades in a neighbouring country are "good boys." The German bourgeoisie has held up those "good boys" of French Socialists as models for the Bebels and the Kautskys *hundreds of times*. The French bourgeoisie quite recently pointed to the "good boy" Bebel as a model for the French Socialists. It is an old trick, Mr. Struve! You will find only children and ignoramuses swallowing that bait. The complete unanimity of international revolutionary Social-Democracy on all major questions of program and tactics is an incontrovertible fact.

** Let us remind the reader that the article [by Plekhanov—*Ed.*] "What Should Not be Done?" (*Iskra* No. 52) was hailed with pomp and fanfare by the *Osvobozhdeniye* as a "noteworthy turn" towards concessions to the opportunists. The trend of the principles behind the new *Iskra* ideas was especially lauded by the *Osvobozhdeniye* in an item on the split among the Russian Social-Democrats. Commenting on Trotsky's pamphlet, "Our Political Tasks," the *Osvobozhdeniye* pointed out the similarity between the ideas of this author and what was once written and said by the editors of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, Krichevsky, Martynov, Akimov (see the leaflet entitled "An Obliging Liberal" published by the *Vperyod*). The *Osvobozhdeniye* welcomed Mar-

Mr. Struve's article contains a number of very interesting statements, which we can note here only in passing. He intends "to create Russian democracy by relying on class collaboration and not on class struggle," in which case "the socially privileged intelligentsia" (something in the nature of the "cultured nobility" to which Mr. Struve makes obeisance with the grace of a genuinely fashionable ... lackey) will bring the weight of its "social position" (the weight of its moneybags) to this "non-class" party. Mr. Struve expresses the desire to show the youth the worthlessness "of the radical commonplace to the effect that the bourgeoisie has become frightened and has sold out the proletariat and the cause of liberty." (We welcome *this desire with all our heart. Nothing would confirm the correctness of* this Marxian "commonplace" better than a war waged against it by Mr. Struve. Please, Mr. Struve, don't pigeon-hole this splendid plan of yours!)

For the purposes of our subject it is important to note the *practical* slogans against which this politically sensitive representative of the Russian bourgeoisie, who is so responsive to the slightest change in the weather, is fighting at the present time. First, he is fighting against the slogan of republicanism. Mr. Struve is firmly convinced that this slogan is "incomprehensible and foreign to the masses of the people" (he forgets to add: comprehensible, but not of advantage to the bourgeoisie!). We should like to see what reply Mr. Struve would get from the workers in our study circles and at our mass meetings! Or are the workers not of the people? And what about the peasants? They are given to what Mr. Struve calls "naive republicanism" ("to kick out the tsar")—but the liberal bourgeoisie believes that *naive* republicanism will be replaced not by deliberate republicanism but by deliberate monarchism! *Ça dépend,* Mr. Struve; it all depends on circumstances. Neither tsarism nor the bourgeoisie can do other than oppose a radical improvement in the condition of the peasantry at the expense of the landed estates, whereas the working class cannot but assist the peasantry in this respect.

Secondly, Mr. Struve assures us that "in a civil war the party that attacks, always proves to be in the wrong." This idea verges closely on the above-mentioned trends of the new *Iskra* ideas. We will not say, of course, that in civil war it is *always* advantageous to attack; no, sometimes defensive tactics are imperative *for a time.* But to apply a proposition like the one Mr. Struve has made to Russia in 1905 merely means to reveal some of that "radical commonplace" ("the bourgeoisie takes fright and betrays the cause of liberty"). Whoever now refuses to attack the autocracy and reaction, whoever is not making preparations for such an attack, whoever is not advocating it, takes the name of adherent of the revolution in vain.

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tynov's pamphlet on the two dictatorships (*cf.* the item in the *Vperyod* No. 9). Finally, Starovyer's belated complaints about the old slogan of the old *Iskra,* "first draw a line of demarcation and then unite," met with special sympathy on the part of the *Osvobozhdeniye.*

Mr. Struve condemns the slogans calling for "secrecy" and "rioting" (a riot being "an uprising in miniature"). Mr. Struve spurns both the one and the other—and he does so from the standpoint of "approaching the masses!" We should like to ask Mr. Struve whether he can point to any passage in, for instance, *What Is To Be Done?*—the work of an extreme revolutionary from his standpoint—which advocates rioting. As regards "secrecy" is there really much difference between, for example, us and Mr. Struve? Are we not both working on "illegal" newspapers which are being smuggled into Russia "secretly" and which serve the "secret" groups of either the *Osvobozhdeniye* League or the R.S.D.L.P.? Our workers' mass meetings are often held "secretly"—that sin does exist. But what about the meetings of the gentlemen of the *Osvobozhdeniye* League? Is there any reason why you should brag, Mr. Struve, and look down upon the despised partisans of despised secrecy?

True, the supplying of arms to the workers demands strict secrecy. On this point Mr. Struve is rather more outspoken. Just listen: "As regards armed insurrection or a revolution in the technical sense, only mass propaganda in favour of a democratic program can create the social psychology requisite for a general armed uprising. Thus, even from the point of view that an armed uprising is the *inevitable* consummation of the present struggle for emancipation—a view which I do not share—the permeation of the masses with ideas of democratic reform is a fundamental and most necessary task."

Mr. Struve tries to dodge the question. He speaks of the inevitability of an uprising instead of speaking about its imperativeness for the victory of the revolution. The uprising—unprepared, spontaneous, sporadic—has already begun. No one can positively vouch that it will develop into a comprehensive and integral popular armed uprising, for that depends on the state of the revolutionary forces (which can be fully gauged only in the course of the struggle itself), on the behaviour of the government and the bourgeoisie, and on a number of other circumstances which it is impossible to estimate exactly. There is no point in switching the discussion to inevitability, in the sense of absolute certainty with regard to some definite event, as Mr. Struve does. What you must discuss, if you want to be a partisan of the revolution, is whether insurrection is *imperative for the victory* of the revolution, whether it is imperative to proclaim it vigorously, to advocate and make immediate and energetic preparations for it. Mr. Struve cannot fail to understand this difference: he does not, for instance, obscure the question of the necessity of universal suffrage, which is indisputable for a democrat, by raising the question of whether its attainment is inevitable in the course of the present revolution, which is debatable and of no urgency for people engaged in political activity. By dodging the question of the necessity of an uprising, Mr. Struve expresses the innermost essence of the political position of the liberal bourgeoisie. In the first place, the bourgeoisie would rather come to terms with the autocracy than crush it; sec-

ondly, the bourgeoisie in any case leaves the armed struggle to the workers. This is the *real* meaning of Mr. Struve's evasiveness. That is why he *draws back from the question of the necessity of an uprising to the question of* the "social psychology" requisite for it, of preliminary "propaganda." Just as the bourgeois windbags in the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 engaged in drawing up resolutions, declarations and decisions, in "mass propaganda" and in preparing the "requisite social psychology" at a time when it was a matter of resisting the armed force of the government, when the movement "had made" an armed struggle "imperative," when verbal persuasion alone (which is a hundredfold necessary during the preparatory period) became common, bourgeois inactivity and cowardice—so also Mr. Struve evades the question of insurrection, screening himself behind *phrases.* Mr. Struve graphically shows us what many Social-Democrats stubbornly fail to see, namely, that a revolutionary period differs from ordinary, everyday preparatory periods in history in that the sentiments, the excitation *of feeling and convictions of the masses must and do reveal themselves in action.*

Vulgar revolutionism is the failure to see that the word is also a deed; this proposition is indisputable when applied to history *generally* or to those periods of history when no open political mass actions take place, and when they cannot be replaced or artifically evoked by *putsches* of any sort. *Khvostism* on the part of revolutionaries is the failure to understand that—when a revolutionary period has started, when the old "superstructure" has cracked from top to bottom, when open political action on the part of the classes and masses who are creating a new superstructure for themselves has become an accomplished fact, when civil war has begun—if one still confines oneself to "words" *as of old,* failing to advance the *direct slogan* to pass to "deeds," if one still tries to avoid deeds by pleading *the need for "psychological requisites" and "propaganda" in general,* that is apathy, deadness, pedantry, or else it is betrayal of the revolution and treachery to it. The Frankfurt windbags of the democratic bourgeoisie are a memorable historical example of just such treachery or of just such pedantic stupidity.

Would you like an explanation of this difference between vulgar revolutionism and the *khvostism* of revolutionaries, taken from the history of the Social-Democratic movement in Russia? We shall give you such an explanation. Just call to mind the years 1901 and 1902, which are so recent but which already seem ancient history to us today. Demonstrations had begun. *The protagonists of vulgar revolutionism raised a cry about "storming"* (*Rabocheye Dyelo*), "bloodthirsty leaflets" were issued (of Berlin origin, if my memory does not fail me), attacks were made on the "literariness" and on the bureaucratic nature of the idea of conducting agitation on a national scale through a newspaper (Nadezhdin). On the other hand, the revolutionaries given to *khvostism* preached that "the economic struggle is the *best* means of political agitation." What was the attitude of the rev-

olutionary Social-Democrats? They attacked both of these tendencies. They condemned flashes in the pan and the cries about storming, for it was or should have been obvious to all that open mass action was a matter of days to come. They condemned *khvostism* and bluntly issued the slogan *even* of a popular armed uprising, not in the sense of a direct appeal (Mr. Struve would not discover any appeals to "riots" in our utterances of that period), but in the sense of a *necessary* deduction, in the sense of "propaganda" (about which Mr. Struve has bethought himself only now—our honourable Mr. Struve is always several years behind the times), in the sense of preparing that very "requisite social psychology" about which the representatives of the bewildered, huckstering bourgeoisie are now holding forth "sadly and inappropriately." *At that time* propaganda and agitation, agitation and propaganda, were really pushed to the fore by reason of the objective state of affairs. *At that time* the work of publishing an all-Russian political newspaper, the weekly issuance of which was regarded as an ideal, could be proposed (and was proposed in *What Is To Be Done?*) as the touchstone of the work of preparing for an uprising. *At that time* the slogans advocating mass agitation *instead of* direct armed action, preparation of the social psychology requisite for insurrection *instead of* flashes in the pan, were the only correct slogans for the revolutionary Social-Democratic movement. *At the present time* the slogans have been superseded by events, the movement has gone beyond them, they have become cast-offs, rags fit only to clothe the hypocrisy of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and the *khvostism* of the new *Iskra*!

Or am I mistaken, perhaps? Perhaps the revolution has not yet begun? Perhaps the time for open political action of classes has not yet arrived? Perhaps there is still no civil war, and the criticism of weapons should as yet not be the *necessary* and obligatory successor, heir, trustee and executor of the weapon of criticism?

Look around, come out of your study into the streets; you will find an answer to these questions there. Has not the government itself started civil war by shooting down hosts of peaceful and unarmed citizens everywhere? Are not the armed Black-Hundreds acting as "arguments" of the autocracy? Has not the bourgeoisie—even the bourgeoisie—recognized the need for a citizens' militia? Does not Mr. Struve himself, the ideally moderate and punctilious Mr. Struve, say (alas, he says so only to evade the point!) that "the open nature of revolutionary action" (that's the sort of fellows we are today!) "is now one of the most important conditions for exerting an educating influence upon the masses of the people?"

Those who have eyes to see can have no doubt as to how the question of armed insurrection must now be presented by the partisans of revolution. Just take a look at the *three* ways in which this question has been presented in the organs of the free press which are at all capable of influencing the *masses*.

The first presentation. The resolution of the Third Congress of the Rus-

sian Social-Democratic Labour Party.* It is publicly acknowledged and declared that the general democratic revolutionary movement *has already brought about the necessity* for an armed uprising. The organization of the proletariat for an uprising has been placed on the order of the day as one of the essential, principal and *indispensable* tasks of the Party. Instructions are issued to adopt the *most energetic* measures to arm the proletariat and to ensure the possibility of directly leading the uprising.

The second presentation. An article in the *Osvobozhdeniye*, containing a statement of principles, by the "leader of the Russian constitutionalists" (as Mr. Struve was recently described by such an influential organ of the European bourgeoisie as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*), or the leader of the Russian progressive bourgeoisie. He does not share the opinion that an uprising is inevitable. Secret activity and riots are the specific methods of irrational revolutionism. Republicanism is a method of stunning. The question of armed insurrection is really a mere technical question, whereas "the fundamental and most necessary task" is *to carry on mass propaganda* and to prepare the requisite social psychology.

The third presentation. The resolution of the new *Iskra*-ite Conference. Our task is to prepare an uprising. A planned uprising is precluded. Favourable conditions for an uprising are created by the disorganization of the

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* The following is the text in full:

"*Whereas*

"1. the proletariat, being, by virtue of its very position, the most advanced and the only consistently revolutionary class, is for that very reason called upon to play the leading part in the general democratic revolutionary movement in Russia;

"2. this movement has already brought about the necessity for an armed uprising;

"3. the proletariat will inevitably take a most energetic part in this uprising, this participation determining the fate of the revolution in Russia;

"4. the proletariat can play the leading part in this revolution only if it is welded into a united and independent political force under the banner of the Social-Democratic Labour Party, which is to guide its struggle not only ideologically but practically as well;

"5. it is only by filling this part that the proletariat can be assured of the most favourable conditions for the struggle for Socialism against the propertied classes of a bourgeois-democratic Russia;

"the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. recognizes that the task of organizing the proletariat for direct struggle against the autocracy through armed insurrection is one of the most important and pressing tasks of the Party in the present revolutionary period.

"The Congress therefore resolves to instruct all the Party organizations:

"a) to explain to the proletariat by means of propaganda and agitation not only the political importance, but also the practical organizational aspect of the impending armed uprising;

"b) in this propaganda and agitation to explain the part played by mass political strikes, which may be of great importance at the beginning and in the very process of the insurrection;

"c) to adopt the most energetic measures to arm the proletariat and also to draw up a plan for the armed uprising and for direct leadership of the latter, establishing for this purpose, to the extent that it is necessary, special groups of Party functionaries." (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

government, by our agitation, and by our organization. Only then "can technical military preparations acquire more or less serious significance."

And is that all? Yes, that is all. The new *Iskra*-ite leaders of the proletariat still do not know whether insurrection has become imperative. It is still not clear to them whether the task of organizing the proletariat for direct battle has become an urgent one. It is not necessary to urge the adoption of the most energetic measures; it is far more important (in 1905, and not in 1902) to explain in general outlines under what conditions these measures "may" acquire "more or less serious" significance....

Do you see now, Comrades of the new *Iskra*, where your turn to Martynovism has led you? Do you realize that your political philosophy has proved to be a rehash of the *Osvobozhdeniye* philosophy?—that (against your will and without your being aware of it) you are following in the wake of the monarchist bourgeoisie? Is it clear to you now that, while repeating what you know by rote and attaining perfection in sophistry, you have lost sight of the fact that—in the memorable words of Peter Struve's memorable article—"the open nature of revolutionary *action* is now one of the most important conditions for exerting an educating influence upon the masses of the people"?

9. WHAT DOES BEING A PARTY OF EXTREME OPPOSITION IN TIME OF REVOLUTION MEAN?

Let us return to the resolution on a provisional government. We have shown that the tactics of the new *Iskra*-ites do not push the revolution further ahead—a thing which they may have wanted their resolution to make possible for them—but back. We have shown that these very tactics *tie the hands* of Social-Democracy in the struggle against the inconsistent bourgeoisie and do not safeguard it against merging in bourgeois democracy. Naturally, the false premises of the resolution lead to the false conclusion that: "Therefore, Social-Democracy must not set itself the aim of seizing power or sharing power in the provisional government, but must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition." Consider the first half of this conclusion, which is part of a statement of aims. Do the new *Iskra*-ites declare the aim of Social-Democratic activity to be a decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism? They do. They are not able to formulate the requisites for a decisive victory correctly, and they stray into the *Osvobozhdeniye* formulation, but they do set themselves the aforementioned aim. Further: do they connect a provisional government with an uprising? Yes, they do so plainly, by stating that a provisional government "will emerge from a victorious popular uprising." Finally, do they set themselves the aim of leading the uprising? Yes, they do. Like Mr. Struve, they do not admit that an uprising is imperative and urgent, but at the same time, in contradistinction to Mr. Struve, they say that "Social-Democ-

racy strives to *subject* it" (the uprising) "to its influence and *leadership* and to use it in the interests of the working class."

Does not this hang together nicely? We set ourselves the *aim* of subjecting the uprising of both the proletarian and the *non-proletarian* masses to our influence and our leadership, and of using it in our interests. Accordingly, we set ourselves the aim of leading, in the course of the uprising, both the proletariat and the revolutionary bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie ("the non-proletarian groups"), *i.e.*, of *"sharing"* the leadership of the uprising between the Social-Democrats and the revolutionary bourgeoisie. We set ourselves the aim of securing *victory* for the uprising, which should lead to the establishment of a provisional government ("which will emerge from a victorious popular uprising"). *Therefore* ... therefore we must not set ourselves the aim of seizing power or of sharing it in a provisional revolutionary government!!

Our friends cannot dovetail their arguments. They vacillate between the standpoint of Mr. Struve, who is evading the issue of an uprising, and the standpoint of revolutionary Social-Democracy, which calls upon us to undertake this urgent task. They vacillate between anarchism, which condemns participation in a provisional revolutionary government on principle, as treachery to the proletariat, and Marxism, which demands such participation on condition that the Social-Democratic Party exercise the leading influence in the uprising.* They have absolutely no independent position: neither that of Mr. Struve, who wants to come to terms with tsarism and is therefore compelled to resort to evasions and subterfuges on the question of insurrection, nor that of the anarchists, who condemn all action "from above" and all participation in a bourgeois revolution. The new *Iskra*-ites confuse a deal with tsarism with a victory over tsarism. They want to take part in the bourgeois revolution. They have gone somewhat in advance of Martynov's *Two Dictatorships.* They even consent to lead the uprising of the people—in order to renounce that leadership immediately after victory is won (or, perhaps, immediately before the victory?), *i.e., in order not to avail themselves of the fruits of victory* but to turn them over *entirely to the bourgeoisie.* This is what they call "using the uprising in the interests of the working class...."

There is no need to dwell on this muddle any longer. It will be more useful to examine how this muddle *originated* in the formulation which reads: "to remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition."

This is one of the familiar propositions of international revolutionary Social-Democracy. It is a perfectly correct proposition. It has become a truism for all opponents of revisionism or opportunism in parliamentary countries. It has become generally accepted as the legitimate and necessary rebuff to "parliamentary cretinism," Millerandism, Bernsteinism and the Italian reformism of the Turati brand. Our good new *Iskra*-ites have learned

* See *Proletary*, No. 3, "On a Provisional Revolutionary Government," article two.

this excellent proposition by heart and are zealously applying it... *quite inappropriately.* Categories of parliamentary struggle are introduced into resolutions written for conditions in which no parliament exists. The concept "opposition," which has become the reflection and the expression of a political situation in which no one seriously speaks of an *uprising,* is senselessly carried over to a situation in which an uprising *has begun* and in which all the supporters of the revolution are thinking and talking about leadership in it. The desire to *"stick to"* old methods, *i.e.,* action only "from below," is expressed with pomp and circumstance *precisely at a time* when the revolution has confronted us with the necessity, in the event of the uprising being victorious, of acting *from above.*

No, our new *Iskra*-ites are decidedly out of luck! Even when they formulate a correct Social-Democratic proposition they don't know how to apply it correctly. They failed to take into consideration that in a period in which a revolution has begun, when there is no parliament in existence, when there is civil war, when there are insurrectionary outbreaks, the concepts and terms of parliamentary struggle are changed and transformed into their opposites. They failed to take into consideration the fact that, under the circumstances referred to, amendments are moved by way of street demonstrations, interpellations are introduced in the form of aggressive action by armed citizens, opposition to the government is expressed by forcibly overthrowing the government.

Like a well-known hero of our folklore, who always repeated good advice just when it was most out of place, our admirers of Martynov repeat the lessons of peaceful parliamentarism just at a time when, as they themselves admit, actual hostilities have commenced. There is nothing more bizarre than this pompous emphasis of the slogan "extreme opposition" in a resolution which begins by referring to a "decisive victory of the revolution" and to a "popular uprising"! Just try to visualize, gentlemen, what it means to represent the "extreme opposition" in an insurrectionary period. Does it mean exposing the government or deposing it? Does it mean voting against the government or defeating its armed forces in open battle? Does it mean refusing the government replenishments for its Treasury or does it mean the revolutionary seizure of this Treasury in order to use it for the requirements of the uprising, to arm the workers and peasants and to convoke a constituent assembly? Do you not begin to understand, gentlemen, that the term "extreme opposition" expresses only negative actions—to expose, to vote against, to refuse? Why is this so? Because this term applies only to parliamentary struggle and, moreover, to a period when no one makes "decisive victory" the immediate object of the struggle. Do you not begin to understand that things undergo a cardinal change in this respect from the moment the politically oppressed people launch a determined attack along the whole front in desperate battle for victory?

The workers ask us: Is it necessary to buckle down energetically to the urgent business of insurrection? What is to be done to make the incipient

uprising victorious? What use should be made of the victory? What program can and should be applied when victory is achieved? The new *Iskra*-ites, who are making Marxism more profound, answer: We must remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition.... Well, were we not right in calling these knights past masters in philistinism?

10. "REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNES" AND REVOLUTIONARY-DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY

The Conference of the new *Iskra*-ites did not stick to the anarchist position into which the new *Iskra* had talked itself (only "from below," not "from below and from above"). The absurdity of conceding an uprising and not conceding victory and participation in a provisional revolutionary government was too glaring. The resolution therefore introduced certain reservations and restrictions into the solution of the question proposed by Martynov and Martov. Let us consider these reservations as stated in the following section of the resolution:

> "These tactics" ("to remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition") "do not, of course, in any way exclude the expediency of a partial and episodic seizure of power and the establishment of revolutionary communes in one or another city, in one or another district, exclusively for the purpose of helping to spread the uprising and disrupting the government."

That being the case, it means that in principle they concede action from above as well as from below. It means that the proposition laid down in L. Martov's well-known article in the *Iskra* (No. 93) is being discarded, and that the tactics of the *Vperyod*, *i.e.*, not only "from below," but also "from above," are acknowledged as correct.

Further, the seizure of power (even if it is partial, episodic, etc.) obviously presupposes the participation not only of Social-Democrats and not only of the proletariat. This follows from the fact that it is not only the proletariat that is interested and takes an active part in a democratic revolution. This follows from the fact that the uprising is a "popular uprising," as is stated in the beginning of the resolution we are discussing, that "non-proletarian groups" (the words used in the Conference resolution on the uprising), *i.e.*, the bourgeoisie, also take part in it. Hence, the principle that any participation of Socialists in a provisional revolutionary government jointly with the petty bourgeoisie is treachery to the working class *was thrown overboard by the Conference*, which is what the *Vperyod* demanded. "Treachery" does not cease to be treachery because the action which constitutes it is partial, episodic, local, etc. Hence, the parallel established between participation in a provisional revolutionary government

and vulgar Jaurèsism *was thrown overboard* by the Conference, which is what the *Vperyod* demanded. A government does not cease to be a government because its power does not extend to many cities but is confined to a single city, does not extend to many districts but is confined to a single district; nor is the fact that it is a government determined by what it is called. Thus, *the Conference discarded the formulation of the principles involved in this question* which the new *Iskra* tried to give.

Let us now see whether the restrictions imposed by the Conference on the formation of revolutionary governments and participation in them, which is now permitted in principle, are reasonable. What the difference is between the concept "episodic" and the concept "provisional," we do not know. We are afraid that this "new" and foreign word is intended to cover up a lack of clear thinking. It *appears* "more profound," but actually it is only more foggy and confused. What is the difference between the "expediency" of a partial "seizure of power" in a city or district, and participation in a provisional revolutionary government of the entire state? Do not "cities" include such cities as St. Petersburg, where the events of January 9 took place? Do not districts include the Caucasus, which is bigger than many a state? Will not the problems (which at one time vexed the new *Iskra*) of what to do with the prisons, the police, public funds, etc., confront us the moment we "seize power" in a single city, let alone in a district? No one will deny, of course, that if we lack sufficient forces, if the uprising is not wholly victorious, or if the victory is indecisive, it is possible that provisional revolutionary governments will be established in separate localities, in individual cities and the like. But what is the point of such an assumption, gentlemen? Do not you yourselves speak at the beginning of the resolution about a "decisive victory of the revolution," about a "victorious popular uprising"?? Since when have the Social-Democrats taken over the job of the anarchists: to divide the attention and the aims of the proletariat, to direct its attention to the "partial" instead of to the general, the single, the integral and complete? While presupposing the "seizure of power" in a single city, you yourselves speak of "spreading the uprising"—to another city, may we venture to think? to all cities, may we dare to hope? Your conclusions, gentlemen, are as unsound and haphazard, as contradictory and confused as your premises. The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. gave an exhaustive and clear answer to the question of a provisional revolutionary government in general. And this answer covers all cases of local provisional governments as well. The answer given by the Conference, however, by artificially and arbitrarily singling out a *part* of the question, merely *dodges* (but unsuccessfully) the question as a whole, and creates confusion.

What does the term "revolutionary commune" mean? Does it differ from the concept "provisional revolutionary government," and, if so, in what respect? The gentlemen of the Conference themselves do not know. Confusion of revolutionary thought leads them, as very often happens,

to *revolutionary phrasemongering*. Yes, the use of the words "revolutionary commune" in a resolution passed by representatives of Social-Democracy is revolutionary phrasemongering and nothing more. Marx more than once condemned such phrasemongering, when "fascinating" terms of the *bygone past* were used to hide the tasks of the future. In such cases, a fascinating term that has played its part in history becomes futile and pernicious trumpery, a child's rattle. We must explain to the workers and to the whole of the people clearly and unequivocally *why* we want a provisional revolutionary government to be set up, and *exactly what changes* we shall accomplish, if we exercise decisive influence on the government, on the very morrow of the victory of the popular uprising which has already commenced. These are the questions that confront political leaders.

The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. gave perfectly clear answers to these questions and drew up a complete program of these changes—the minimum program of our Party. The word "commune," however, is not an answer at all; it only serves to confuse people by the distant echo of a sonorous phrase, or empty rhetoric. The more we cherish the memory of the Paris Commune of 1871, for instance, the less permissible is it to refer to it off-hand, without analysing its mistakes and the special conditions attending it. To do so would be to follow the absurd example set by the Blanquists, who (in 1874, in their "Manifesto") paid homage to every act of the Commune, and whom Engels ridiculed. What reply will a "Conferencer" give to a worker who asks him about *this* "revolutionary commune," mentioned in the resolution? He will only be able to tell him that this was the name given to a workers' government that once existed, which was unable to and could not at that time, distinguish between the elements of a democratic revolution and those of a Socialist revolution, which confused the tasks of fighting for a republic with the tasks of fighting for Socialism, which *was unable to carry out the task of launching an energetic* military offensive against Versailles, which made a mistake in not seizing the Bank of France, etc. In short, whether in your answer you refer to the Paris Commune or to some other commune, your answer will be: it was a government *such as ours should not be*. A fine answer, isn't it! Does it not testify to pedantic ratiocination and impotence on the part of a revolutionary when he maintains silence with regard to the practical program of the Party and makes inappropriate attempts in the resolution of give a lesson in history? Does this not reveal the very mistake which they unsuccessfully tried to accuse us of having committed, *i.e.*, confusing a democratic revolution with a Socialist revolution, between which none of the "communes" could differentiate?

The aim of a provisional government (so inappropriately termed "commune") is declared to be "exclusively" to spread the uprising and to disrupt the government. Taken in its literal sense, the word "exclusively" eliminates all other aims; it is an echo of the absurd theory of "only from below." Such elimination of other aims is another instance of shortsightedness and

lack of reflection. A "revolutionary commune," *i.e.*, a revolutionary government, even if only in a single city, will inevitably have to administer (even if provisionally, "partly, episodically") *all* the affairs of state, and it is the height of folly to hide one's head under one's wing and refuse to see this. This government will have to enact an eight-hour working day, establish workers' control over factories, institute free universal education, introduce the election of judges, set up peasant committees, etc.; in a word, it will certainly have to carry out a number of reforms. To designate these reforms as "helping to spread the uprising" would be playing around with words and deliberately causing greater confusion in a matter which requires absolute clarity.

* * *

The concluding part of the new *Iskra*-ites' resolution does not provide any new material for a criticism of the trend towards the principles of "Economism" which has revived in our Party, but it illustrates what has been said above from a somewhat different angle.

Here is that part:

> "Only in one event should Social-Democracy, on its own initiative, direct its efforts towards seizing power and holding it as long as possible—namely, in the event of the revolution spreading to the advanced countries of Western Europe, where conditions for the achievement of Socialism have already reached a certain [?] degree of maturity. In that event, the restricted historical scope of the Russian revolution can be considerably extended and the possibility of entering the path of Socialist transformation will arise.
>
> "By framing its tactics in accordance with the view that, during the whole period of the revolution, the Social-Democratic Party will retain the position of extreme revolutionary opposition to all the governments that may succeed one another in the course of the revolution, Social-Democracy will best be able to prepare itself to utilize political power if it falls [??] into its hands."

The basic idea expressed here is the same as that repeatedly formulated by the *Vperyod*, when it stated that we must not be afraid (as is Martynov) of a complete victory for Social-Democracy in a democratic revolution, *i.e.*, of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, for such a victory will enable us to rouse Europe, and the Socialist proletariat of Europe will then throw off the yoke of the bourgeoisie, and in its turn help us to accomplish the Socialist revolution. But see how this idea is debased in the new *Iskra*-ites' rendering of it. We shall not dwell on details—on the absurd assumption that power could "fall" into the hands of a class-conscious party which considers seizure of power harmful tactics; on the fact that in Europe the conditions for Socialism have reached not a certain degree of maturity, but are already mature; on the

fact that our Party program does not speak of Socialist reforms but only of a Socialist revolution. Let us take the principal and basic difference between the idea as presented by the *Vperyod* and as presented in the resolution. The *Vperyod* set the revolutionary proletariat of Russia an active aim: to win in the battle for democracy and to use this victory for carrying the revolution into Europe. The resolution fails to grasp this connection between our "decisive victory" (not in the new *Iskra* sense) and the revolution in Europe, and therefore it speaks not about the tasks of the proletariat, not about the prospects of *its* victory, but about one of the possibilities in general: "in the event of the revolution spreading...." The *Vperyod* expressly and definitely indicated—and this was incorporated in the *resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic* Labour Party—just how "political power" can and must "be utilized" in the interests of the proletariat, bearing in mind what can be achieved immediately, at the given stage of social development, and what must first be achieved as a democratic prerequisite of the struggle for Socialism. Here, also, the resolution is hopelessly dragging at the tail when it states: "will be able to prepare itself to utilize," but fails to say *in what way and how* it will be able to prepare itself, and for *what sort* of utilization. We have no doubt, for instance, that the new *Iskra*-ites may be "able to prepare themselves to utilize" the leading position in the Party; but the point is that so far their experience along the lines of such utilization and the extent to which they are prepared for this do not hold out much hope of possibility being transformed into reality....

The *Vperyod* quite definitely stated wherein lies the real "possibility of retaining power"—namely, in the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, in their joint mass strength, which is capable of outweighing all the forces of counter-revolution, in the inevitable concurrence of their interests in *democratic* changes. Here, too, the resolution of the Conference gives us nothing positive, merely evading the question. Surely the possibility of retaining power in Russia must be determined by the composition of the social forces in Russia itself, by the circumstances of the democratic revolution which is now taking place in our country. A victory of the proletariat in Europe (and it is a far cry from carrying the revolution into Europe to the victory of the proletariat) would give rise to a desperate counter-revolutionary struggle on the part of the Russian bourgeoisie—yet the *resolution of the new Iskra-ites does not say a* word about this counter-revolutionary force, the importance of which has *been appraised by the resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* If in our fight for a republic and democracy we could not rely upon the *peasantry as well as on the* proletariat, the prospect of our "retaining power" would be hopeless. But if it is not hopeless, if a "decisive victory over tsarism" opens up such a possibility, then we must say so, we must actively call for the transformation of this possibility into reality and issue practical slogans not only for the *contingency* of the revolution being carried over

into Europe, but also *for the purpose* of carrying it over. The reference made by the *khvostist* Social-Democrats to the "restricted historical scope of the Russian revolution" merely serves to cover up their limited understanding of the aims of this democratic revolution and of the role of the proletariat as the vanguard in this revolution!

One of the objections raised to the slogan calling for "the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" is that dictatorship presupposes a "single will" (*Iskra* No. 95), and that there can be no single will of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie. This objection is not sound, for it is based on an abstract, "metaphysical" interpretation of the concept "single will." There may be a single will in one respect and not a single will in another. The absence of singleness of purpose on questions of Socialism and in the struggle for Socialism does not preclude singleness of will in questions of democracy and in the struggle for a republic. To forget this would be tantamount to forgetting the logical and historical difference between a democratic revolution and a Socialist revolution. To forget this would be tantamount to forgetting the character of the democratic revolution as a revolution *of the whole people*: if it is "of the whole people" it means that there *is* "singleness of will" precisely in so far as this revolution satisfies the common needs and requirements of the whole people. Beyond the bounds of democracy there can be no question of a single will of the proletariat and the peasant bourgeoisie. Class struggle between them is inevitable; but it is in a democratic republic that this struggle will be the most thoroughgoing and widespread struggle of the people *for Socialism*. Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy and privilege. In the struggle against this past, in the struggle against counter-revolution, a "single will" of the proletariat and the peasantry is possible, for there exists a unity of interests.

Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage worker against the employer, the struggle for Socialism. Here, singleness of will is impossible.* Here our path lies not from the autocracy to a republic, but from a petty-bourgeois democratic republic to Socialism.

Of course, in actual historical circumstances, the elements of the past become interwoven with those of the future, the two paths cross. Wage labour, with its struggle against private property, exists under the autocracy as well; it exists in its incipient stage even under serfdom. But this does not in the least prevent us from drawing a logical and historical dividing line between the major stages of development. We all draw a distinction between bourgeois revolution and Socialist revolution, we all

* The development of capitalism, which is more widespread and rapid under conditions of freedom, will inevitably put a speedy end to singleness of will; the sooner counter-revolution and reaction are crushed, the sooner will the singleness of will come to an end.

absolutely insist on the necessity of drawing a strict line between them; but can it be denied that in history individual, particular elements of the one revolution and the other become interwoven? Have there not been a number of Socialist movements and attempts at establishing Socialism in the period of democratic revolutions in Europe? And will not the future Socialist revolution in Europe still have to do a great deal that has been left undone in the field of democracy?

A Social-Democrat must never for a moment forget that the proletariat will inevitably have to wage a class struggle for Socialism even against the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. This is beyond doubt. From this logically follows the absolute necessity of a separate, independent and strictly class party of Social-Democracy. From this follows the *temporary nature of our tactics* of "*striking jointly*" with the bourgeoisie and the duty to keep a strict watch "over our ally, as over an enemy," etc. All this is also beyond any doubt. But it would be ridiculous and reactionary to deduce from this that we must forget, ignore or neglect these tasks which, although transient and temporary, are vital at the present time. The fight against the autocracy is a temporary and transient task of the Socialists, but to ignore or neglect this task would be tantamount to betraying Socialism and rendering a service to reaction. The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry is unquestionably only a transient, provisional aim of the Socialists, but to ignore this aim in the period of a democratic revolution would be plainly reactionary.

Concrete political aims must be set in concrete circumstances. All things are relative, all things flow and are subject to change. The program of the German Social-Democratic Party does not contain the demand for a republic. In Germany the situation is such that for all practical purposes this question can hardly be separated from the question of Socialism (although even as regards Germany, Engels, in his comments on the draft of the Erfurt Program of 1891, warned against belittling the importance of a republic and of the struggle for a republic!). In the Russian Social-Democratic Party the question of eliminating the demand for a republic from its program or agitation has never even arisen, for in our country there can be no talk even of an indissoluble connection between the question of a republic and the question of Socialism. It was quite natural for a German Social-Democrat of 1898 not to put the special question of a republic in the forefront, and this evoked neither surprise nor condemnation. But a German Social-Democrat who in 1848 would have left the question of a republic in the shade would have been an outright traitor to the revolution. There is no such thing as abstract truth. Truth is always concrete.

The time will come when the struggle against the Russian autocracy will be ended—the period of democratic revolution in Russia will be over; then it will be ridiculous to talk about "singleness of will" of the proletariat and the peasantry, about a democratic dictatorship, etc. When that time

comes we shall attend to the question of the Socialist dictatorship of the proletariat directly and deal with it at greater length. But at present the party of the advanced class cannot but strive most energetically for a decisive victory of the democratic revolution over tsarism. And a decisive victory is no other than the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

11. A CURSORY COMPARISON BETWEEN SEVERAL OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. AND THOSE OF THE "CONFERENCE"

At the present juncture the tactical questions of the Social-Democratic movement revolve around the question of a provisional revolutionary government. It is neither possible nor necessary to dwell in as great detail on the other resolutions of the Conference. We shall confine ourselves merely to indicating briefly a few points which confirm the difference in principle, analysed above, between the tactical tendencies of the resolutions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and those of the Conference resolutions.

Take the question of the attitude towards the tactics of the government on the eve of the revolution. Once again you will find a comprehensive answer to this question in one of the resolutions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. This resolution takes into consideration all the variegated conditions and tasks of the particular moment: the exposure of the hypocrisy of the government's concessions, the utilization of "travesties of popular representation," the achievement by revolutionary means of the urgent demands of the working class (the principal one being the demand for an eight-hour working day), and, finally, resistance to the Black-Hundreds. In the Conference resolutions this question is divided up and spread over several sections: "resistance to the dark forces of reaction" is mentioned only in the preamble of the resolution on the attitude to other parties. Participation in elections to representative bodies is considered separately from the question of "compromises" between tsarism and the bourgeoisie. Instead of calling for the achievement of an eight-hour working day by revolutionary means, a special resolution, with the big-sounding title "On the Economic Struggle," merely repeats (after high-flown and stupid phrases about "the central place occupied by the labour question in the public life of Russia") the old slogan of agitation for "the legislative institution of an eight-hour working day." The inadequacy and the belatedness of this slogan at the present time are too obvious to require proof.

The question of open political action. The Third Congress takes into consideration the impending *radical* change in our activity. Secret activity and the development of the secret apparatus must on no account be abandoned: this would be playing into the hands of the police and be of the utmost advantage to the government. But at the same time we cannot start

too soon thinking about open action as well. Expedient forms of such action and, consequently, a special apparatus—less secret—must be *prepared* immediately for this purpose. The legal and semi-legal societies must be made use of with a view to transforming them, as far as possible, into bases of the future open Social-Democratic Labour Party in Russia.

Here too the Conference divides up the question, and *fails* to issue any slogans that would encompass it as a whole. There bobs up as a separate point the ridiculous instruction given to the Organization Commission to see to the "placing" of its legally functioning publicists. There is the wholly absurd decision to subordinate to its influence "the democratic newspapers that set themselves the aim of rendering assistance to the working-class *movement.*" *This is the professed aim of all our legal liberal newspapers,* nearly all of which follow the trend of the *Osvobozhdeniye.* Why should not the editors of the *Iskra* make a start themselves by carrying out their *own advice and giving us an example of how to subject the Osvobozhdeniye* to Social-Democratic influence?... In place of the slogan calling for the utilization of the legally existing unions for the purpose of establishing bases for the Party, we are given, first, *private advice* about the "trade" unions only (that all Party members must join them) and, secondly, advice to guide "the revolutionary organizations of the workers"="organizations not officially constituted"="revolutionary workers' clubs." How these "clubs" come to be classed as unofficially constituted organizations, what these "clubs" really are—goodness only knows. Instead of definite and clear instructions from a supreme Party body, we have some jottings of ideas and the rough drafts of publicists. We get no complete picture of the beginning of the Party's transition to an entirely new basis in all its work.

The "peasant question" was approached altogether differently by the Party Congress and by the Conference. The Congress drew up a resolution on the "attitude to the peasant movement," the Conference on "work among the peasants." In the one case prime importance is attached to the task of guiding the widespread revolutionary-democratic movement in the general national interests of the fight against tsarism. In the other instance, the question is reduced to mere "work" among a particular section of society. In the one case, a *central practical slogan for our agitation is advanced,* calling for the immediate organization of revolutionary peasant committees in order to carry out all the democratic changes. In the other, a "*demand for the organization of committees*" is to be presented to a constituent assembly. Why must we wait for this Constituent Assembly? Will it really be constituent? Will it be stable without a preliminary or simultaneous establishment of revolutionary peasant committees? All these questions are ignored by the Conference. All its decisions reflect the same general idea which we have traced—namely, that in the bourgeois revolution we must do only our special work, without setting ourselves the aim of leading the entire democratic movement and of accomplishing this independently. Just as the Economists constantly harped on the idea that the

Social-Democrats should concern themselves with the economic struggle, leaving it to the liberals to take care of the political struggle, so too the new *Iskra*-ites keep harping in all their discussions on the idea that we should creep into a modest corner out of the way of the bourgeois revolution, leaving it to the bourgeoisie to do the active work of carrying out the revolution.

Finally, we cannot but note also the resolution on the attitude toward other parties. The resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. speaks of exposing all the limitations and inadequacies of the bourgeois movement for emancipation, without entertaining the naive idea of enumerating every possible instance of such limitation from Congress to Congress or of drawing a line of distinction between bad bourgeois and good bourgeois. The Conference, repeating the mistake made by Starovyer, carries on a persistent search for such a line, developing the famous "litmus paper" theory. Starovyer started from a very good idea: to put more exacting terms to the bourgeoisie. Only he forgot that any attempt to separate beforehand the bourgeois democrats who are worthy of approval, agreements, etc., from those who are unworthy leads to a "formula" which is immediately thrown overboard by the course of events and which introduces confusion into the proletarian class consciousness. The emphasis is shifted from real unity in the struggle to declarations, promises, slogans. Starovyer considered that "universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot" was the radical slogan that would serve this purpose. Not even two years elapsed, and the "litmus paper" proved its worthlessness, the slogan calling for universal suffrage was adopted by the *Osvobozhdentsi*, who not only came no closer to Social-Democracy as a result of this, but, on the contrary, tried to mislead the workers and divert them from Socialism by means of this very slogan.

Now the new *Iskra*-ites are setting "terms" even "more exacting," are "demanding" from the enemies of tsarism "energetic and unequivocal [!?] support of every determined action of the organized proletariat," etc., going so far as to include "active participation in the self-armament of the people." The line has been drawn much further—but nonetheless this line *has already become outdated once more,* having immediately proved worthless. Why, for instance, is there no slogan calling for a republic? How is it that the Social-Democrats "demand" all manner of things from the bourgeois democrats in the interest of "relentless revolutionary war against all the props of the system of social estates and the monarchy" except a fight for a republic?

That this question is not mere captiousness, that the mistake of the new *Iskra*-ites is of most vital political significance is proved by the "Russian Liberation League" (see *Proletary* No. 4).* These "enemies of tsarism"

* *Proletary* No. 4, which appeared on June 17 [4], 1905, contained a lengthy article entitled "A New Revolutionary Labour League." The article gives the contents of the appeals issued by this league which assumed the name of "Russian Liberation

will fully satisfy all the "requirements" of the new *Iskra*-ites. And yet we have shown that the spirit of the *Osvobozhdeniye* reigns in the program (or lack of program) of this "Russian Liberation League" and that the *Osvobozhdentsi* can easily take it in tow. The Conference, however, declares in the concluding section of the resolution that "Social-Democracy will continue to come out as of old against the *hypocritical friends of the people*, against all those political parties which, though they display a liberal and democratic banner, refuse to render genuine support to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat." The "Russian Liberation League," far from refusing this support, offers it most insistently. Is that a guarantee that the leaders of this League are not "hypocritical friends of the people," even if they are *Osvobozhdentsi?*

You see: by inventing "terms" beforehand and presenting "demands" which are ludicrous by reason of their grim impotence, the new *Iskra*-ites immediately put themselves in a ridiculous position. Their terms and demands immediately prove inadequate when it comes to gauging living realities. Their quest for formulae is hopeless, for there is no formula which can be used to detect all the various manifestations of hypocrisy, inconsistency and limitations of bourgeois democrats. It is not a matter of "litmus paper," of forms, or written and printed demands, nor is it a matter of drawing beforehand a line of distinction between hypocritical and not hypocritical "friends of the people"; it is a matter of real unity in the struggle, of unabating criticism on the part of Social-Democrats of every "uncertain" step taken by bourgeois democrats. What is needed for a "genuine consolidation of all the social forces interested in democratic change" is not the "points" over which the Conference laboured so assiduously and so vainly, but the ability to put forward genuinely revolutionary slogans. For this we need slogans that will raise the revolutionary and *republican bourgeoisie to the level of the proletariat instead of depreciating* the aims of the proletariat to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie. For this the most resolute participation in the uprising is necessary, instead of sophist evasions of the urgent task of armed insurrection.

12. WILL THE SWEEP OF THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION BE DIMINISHED IF THE BOURGEOISIE RECOILS FROM IT?

The foregoing lines were already written when we received a copy of the resolutions adopted by the Caucasian Conference of the new *Iskra*-ites, published by the *Iskra*. Even if we tried we could not have thought of anything better *pour la bonne bouche* (for dessert) than this material.

League" and which set itself the aim of convening a constituent assembly through the medium of an armed uprising. Further, the article defines the attitude of the Social-Democrats to such non-Party leagues. To what extent this league made itself felt, and what its fate was in the revolution is absolutely unknown to us. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

The Editorial Board of the *Iskra* quite justly remarks:

> "On the fundamental question of tactics, the Caucasian Conference arrived at a decision *analogous*" (in truth!) "to the one adopted by the All-Russian Conference" (*i.e.*, of the new *Iskra*-ites).... "The question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards a provisional revolutionary government has been settled by the Caucasian comrades in the spirit of most outspoken opposition to the new method advocated by the *Vperyod* group and the delegates of the so-called Congress who joined it.... It must be admitted that the tactics of the proletarian party in a bourgeois revolution have been *very aptly* formulated by the Conference."

What is true is true. No one could have given a more "apt" formulation of the fundamental error of the new *Iskra*-ites. We shall quote this formulation in full, indicating in parentheses first the blossoms and then the fruit presented at the end.

Here is the resolution of the Caucasian Conference of new *Iskra*-ites on a provisional revolutionary government:

> "Whereas we consider it to be our task to take advantage of the revolutionary situation to render more profound" (of course! They should have added: "*à la* Martynov"!) "the Social-Democratic consciousness of the proletariat" (only to render the consciousness more profound, and not to establish a republic? What a "profound" conception of the revolution!) "and in order to secure for the Party complete freedom to criticize the nascent bourgeois-state system" (it is not our business to secure a republic! Our business is only to secure freedom of criticism. Anarchist ideas give rise to anarchist language: "bourgeois-state" system!), "the Conference declares against the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government and joining such a government" (recall the resolution passed by the Bakuninists ten months before the Spanish revolution and referred to by Engels: see *Proletary* No. 3), "and considers it to be the most expedient course to exercise pressure from without" (from below and not from above) "upon the bourgeois provisional government in order to secure a feasible measure" (?!) "of democratization of the state system. The Conference believes that the formation of a provisional government by Social-Democrats, or their joining such a government, would lead, on the one hand, to the masses of the proletariat becoming disappointed in the Social-Democratic Party and abandoning it because the Social-Democrats, in spite of the fact that they had seized power, would not be able to satisfy the pressing needs of the working class, including the establishment of Socialism" (a republic is not a pressing need! The authors, in their innocence, do not notice that they are speaking a sheerly anarchist language, as if they were repudiating

participation in bourgeois revolutions!), "and, on the other hand, *will cause the bourgeois classes to recoil from the revolution and thus diminish its sweep.*"

That is the point. That is where anarchist ideas become interwoven (as is always the case among the West European Bernsteinians also) with the sheerest opportunism. Just think: not to join a provisional government because this will cause the bourgeoisie to recoil from the revolution and will thus diminish the sweep of the revolution! Here, indeed, we have before us the new *Iskra* philosophy in its complete, pure and consistent form: the revolution is a bourgeois revolution, therefore we must bow down to bourgeois philistinism and make way for it. If we were guided, even in part, even for a moment, by the consideration that our participation might cause the bourgeoisie to recoil, we would simply be yielding precedence in the revolution entirely to the bourgeois classes. We would thereby be *placing the proletariat entirely* under the tutelage of *the bourgeoisie* (while retaining for ourselves complete "freedom of criticism"!!), compelling the proletariat to be meek and mild so as not to cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. We would *emasculate the immediate needs of the proletariat*, namely, its political needs—which the Economists and their epigones have never thoroughly understood—so as not to cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. We would completely abandon the field of revolutionary struggle for the achievement of democracy to the extent required by the proletariat, for the field of bargaining with the bourgeoisie, betraying our principles, betraying the revolution in order thereby to purchase the bourgeoisie's voluntary consent ("that it might not recoil").

In two brief lines, the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ites managed to express the quintessence of the tactics of betraying the revolution and of converting the proletariat into a paltry appendage of the bourgeois classes. The tendency, *which we traced above to the mistakes of the new Iskra-ites, now* stands out before us as a clear and definite principle, *viz.*, to drag at the tail of the monarchist bourgeoisie. Since the establishment of a republic would cause (and is already causing: Mr. Struve, for example) the bourgeoisie to recoil, therefore down with the fight for a republic. Since any resolute and consistent democratic demand on the part of the proletariat always and everywhere in the world causes the bourgeoisie to recoil, therefore, hide in your lairs, comrades workers, act only from without, do not *dream of using the instruments and weapons of the "bourgeois state"* system in the interests of the revolution, and reserve for yourselves "freedom to criticize"!

Here the fundamental fallaciousness of their understanding of the term "bourgeois revolution" has come to the surface. The Martynov or new *Iskra* "understanding" of this term leads straight to a betrayal of the cause of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie.

Those who have forgotten the old Economism, those who do not study

it or remember it, will find it difficult to understand the present off-shoot of Economism. Recall the Bernsteinian *Credo*. From "purely proletarian" views and programs, people arrived at the conclusion: we, the Social-Democrats, must concern ourselves with economics, with the real cause of labour, with freedom to criticize all political chicanery, with rendering Social-Democratic work really more profound. They, the liberals, can concern themselves with politics. God save us from dropping into "revolutionism": that will cause the bourgeoisie to recoil. Those who read the whole *Credo* over again or the Supplement to No. 9 of the *Rabochaya Mysl* (September 1899), will be able to follow this entire line of reasoning.

Today we have the same thing, only on a large scale, applied to an appraisal of the whole of the "great" Russian revolution—alas, already vulgarized and reduced to a travesty beforehand by the theoreticians of orthodox philistinism! We, the Social-Democrats, must concern ourselves with freedom to criticize, with rendering class consciousness more profound, with action from without. They, the bourgeois classes, must have freedom to act, a free field for revolutionary (read: liberal) leadership, freedom to put through "reforms" from above.

These vulgarizers of Marxism have never pondered over what Marx said about the need of substituting the criticism of weapons for the weapon of criticism. They take the name of Marx in vain, while in actual fact they are drawing up resolutions on tactics wholly in the spirit of the Frankfurt bourgeois windbags, who freely criticized absolutism and rendered democratic consciousness more profound, but failed to understand that a time of revolution is a time of action, of action both from above and from below. Having converted Marxism into pedantry, they have made the ideology of the advanced, most determined and energetic revolutionary class the ideology of its most undeveloped strata, which shrink from the difficult revolutionary-democratic tasks and leave it to Messieurs Struves to take care of these democratic tasks.

If the bourgeois classes recoil from the revolution because the Social-Democrats join the revolutionary government, they will thereby "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

Listen to this, Russian workers: The sweep of the revolution will be mightier if it is carried out by Messrs. the Struves who have not been frightened away by the Social-Democrats and who want, not victory over tsarism, but to come to terms with it. The sweep of the revolution will be mightier if, of the two possible outcomes which we have outlined above the first eventuates, *i.e.*, if the monarchist bourgeoisie comes to terms with the autocracy concerning a "constitution" *à la* Shipov!

Social-Democrats who write such disgraceful things in resolutions intended for the guidance of the whole Party, or who approve of such "apt" resolutions, are so blinded by their pedantry, which has utterly corroded the living spirit of Marxism, that they do not see how these resolutions convert all their other fine words into mere phrasemongering. Take any of

their articles in the *Iskra*, or take even the *notorious pamphlet written by* our celebrated Martynov—you will read there about insurrection of the *people*, about carrying the revolution to *completion*, about striving to rely upon the *common people* in the fight against the inconsistent bourgeoisie. But then all these excellent things become miserable phrasemongering *immediately you* accept or commend the idea about "the sweep of the revolution" being "diminished" as a result of the alienation of the bourgeoisie. One of two things, gentlemen: either we, together, with the people, must strive to carry out *the revolution and win a complete victory over* tsarism *in spite of* the inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly bourgeoisie, or we do not accept this "in spite of," we stand in fear lest the bourgeoisie "recoil" *from the revolution in which case we betray the proletariat and* the people to the bourgeoisie—to the inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly *bourgeoisie*.

Don't try to misinterpret what I have said. Don't start howling that you are being charged with deliberate treachery. No, you have constantly been crawling and have at last crawled into the mire just as unconsciously as the Economists of old, drawn inexorably and irrevocably down the inclined plane of making Marxism "more profound" to anti-revolutionary, soulless and lifeless "philosophizing."

Have you ever considered, gentlemen, what the real social forces that determine the "sweep of the revolution" are? Let us leave aside the forces of foreign politics, of international combinations, which have turned out very favourably for us at the present time, but which we all leave out of our discussion, and quite rightly so, inasmuch as it is a question of the internal forces of Russia. Look at the internal social forces. Aligned against the revolution are the autocracy, the imperial court, the police, the government officials, the army and the handful of the élite. The greater the indignation of the people becomes, the less reliable become the troops, and the more the government officials waver. Moreover, the bourgeoisie in general and on the whole is now in favour of the revolution, is zealously making speeches about liberty, holding forth more and more frequently in the name of the people, and even in the name of the revolution.* But we Marxists all know from theory and from *daily and hourly observation* of our liberals, Zemstvo-ists and *Osvobozhdentsi* that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly in its support of the revolution. The bourgeoisie, in the mass, will inevitably turn towards counter-revolution, towards the autocracy, against the revolution and against the people, immediately its narrow, selfish *interests are met, immediately it* "recoils" from consistent democracy (*and it is already recoiling from it!*). There remains the "people," that is, the proletariat and the peasantry. The proletariat alone can be relied on to march to the end, for its goal lies far beyond

* Of interest in this connection is Mr. Struve's open letter to Jaurès, recently published by the latter in *l'Humanité* and by the former in the *Osvobozhdeniye* No. 72.

the democratic revolution. That is why the proletariat fights in the front ranks for a republic and contemptuously rejects silly and unworthy advice to take care not to frighten away the bourgeoisie. The peasantry includes a great number of semi-proletarian as well as petty-bourgeois elements. This causes it also to be unstable and compels the proletariat to unite in a strictly class party. But the instability of the peasantry differs radically from the instability of the bourgeoisie, for at the present time the peasantry is interested not so much in the absolute preservation of private property as in the confiscation of the landed estates, one of the principal forms of private property. While this does not cause the peasantry to become Socialist or cease to be petty-bourgeois, the peasantry is capable of becoming a wholehearted and most radical adherent of the democratic revolution. The peasantry will inevitably become such if only the progress of revolutionary events, which is enlightening it, is not interrupted too soon by the treachery of the bourgeoisie and the defeat of the proletariat. Subject to this condition, the peasantry will inevitably become a bulwark of the revolution and the republic, for only a completely victorious revolution can give the peasantry *everything* in the sphere of agrarian reforms—*everything* that the peasants desire, of which they dream, and of which they truly stand in need (not for the abolition of capitalism as the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" imagine, but) in order to emerge from the mire of semi-serfdom, from the gloom of oppression and servitude, in order to improve their living conditions as much as it is possible to improve them under the system of commodity production.

Moreover, the peasantry is drawn to the revolution not only by the prospect of radical agrarian reform but by its general and permanent interests. Even in the struggle with the proletariat the peasantry stands in need of democracy, for only a democratic system is capable of giving exact expression to its interests and of ensuring its predominance as the mass, the majority. The more enlightened the peasantry becomes (and since the war with Japan it is becoming enlightened much more rapidly than those who are accustomed to measuring enlightenment by the school standard suspect), the more consistently and determinedly will it favour a thoroughgoing democratic revolution; for, unlike the bourgeoisie, it has nothing to fear from the supremacy of the people, but, on the contrary, can only gain by it. A democratic republic will become the ideal of the peasantry as soon as it begins to free itself from its naive *monarchism*, because the deliberate monarchism of the bourgeois brokers (with an upper chamber, etc.) implies for the peasantry the same disfranchisement and the same downtroddenness and ignorance as it suffers from today, only slightly glossed over with the varnish of European constitutionalism.

That is why the bourgeoisie as a class naturally and inevitably strives to come under the wing of the liberal-monarchist party, while the peasantry, in the mass, strives to come under the leadership of the revolutionary and republican party. That is why the bourgeoisie is incapable of carry-

ing the democratic revolution to its consummation, while the peasantry is capable of doing so, and we must exert all our efforts to help it to do so.

It may be objected: but there is no need to prove this, this is all ABC; all Social-Democrats understand this perfectly well. But that is not so. Those who can talk about "the sweep" of the revolution *being "diminished"* because the bourgeoisie will fall away from it do not understand this. Such people *simply repeat the words of our agrarian program by rote without* understanding their meaning, for otherwise they would not be frightened by the concept of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which follows inevitably from the entire Marxian philosophy and from our program; otherwise they would not restrict the sweep of the great Russian revolution to the limits to which the bourgeoisie is prepared to go. Such people defeat their abstract Marxian revolutionary phrases by their concrete anti-Marxian and anti-revolutionary resolutions.

Those who really understand the role of the peasantry in a victorious Russian revolution would not dream of saying that the sweep of the revolution would be diminished if the bourgeoisie recoiled from it. For, as a matter of fact, the Russian revolution will begin to assume its real sweep, will really assume the widest revolutionary sweep possible in the epoch of bourgeois-democratic revolution, only when the bourgeoisie recoils from it and when the masses of the peasantry come out as active revolutionaries side by side with the proletariat. In order that it may be consistently carried to its conclusion, our democratic revolution must rely on such forces as are capable of paralysing the inevitable inconsistency of the bourgeoisie (*i.e., capable precisely of "causing it to recoil from the revolution,"* which the Caucasian adherents of *Iskra* fear so much because of their lack of judgment).

The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the Socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. Such are the tasks of the proletariat, which the new *Iskra*-ites always present so narrowly in their arguments and resolutions about the scope of the revolution.

One circumstance, however, must not be forgotten, although it is frequently lost sight of in discussions about the "sweep" of the revolution. It must not be forgotten that the point at issue is not what difficulties this problem presents, but what is the road along which we must seek and attain its solution. The point is not whether it is difficult or easy to make the sweep of the revolution mighty and invincible, but how we must act in order to make this sweep more powerful. It is precisely on the fundamental nature of our activity, on the direction which it should take, that

our views differ. We emphasize this because careless and unscrupulous people too frequently confuse two different questions, namely, the question of the direction in which the road leads, *i.e.*, the selection of one of two different roads, and the question of the ease with which the goal can be reached, or of how near the goal is on the given road.

We have not dealt here with this last question at all because it has not evoked any disagreement or divergency in the Party. But it goes without saying that the question is extremely important in itself and deserves the most serious attention of all Social-Democrats. It would be a piece of unpardonable optimism to forget the difficulties which accompany the task of drawing into the movement not only the mass of the working class, but of the peasantry as well. These difficulties have more than once been the rock against which all the efforts to carry a democratic revolution to completion have been wrecked. And above all it was the inconsistent and self-seeking bourgeoisie which triumphed, because it both "made capital" by way of securing monarchist protection against the people, and "preserved the virginity" of liberalism . . . or of the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend. But a thing may be difficult without being unattainable. What is important is to be convinced that the path chosen is the correct one, and this conviction will multiply a hundredfold the revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm which can perform miracles.

How deep is the gulf that divides Social-Democrats today on the question of what path to choose can be seen at once by comparing the Caucasian resolution of the new *Iskra*-ites with the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The Congress resolution says that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, that it will invariably try to deprive us of the gains of the revolution. Therefore, make energetic preparations for the fight, comrades and fellow workers! Arm yourselves, win the peasantry to your side! We shall not surrender our revolutionary conquests to the self-seeking bourgeoisie without a fight. The resolution of the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ites says: The bourgeoisie is inconsistent, it may recoil from the revolution. Therefore, comrades and fellow workers, please do not think of joining a provisional government, for, if you do, the bourgeoisie will surely recoil, and the sweep of the revolution will thereby be diminished!

One side says: push the revolution forward, to its consummation, in spite of the resistance or the passivity of the inconsistent bourgeoisie.

The other side says: do not think of carrying the revolution to completion independently, for if you do, the inconsistent bourgeoisie will recoil from it.

Are these not two diametrically opposite paths? Is it not obvious that one set of tactics absolutely excludes the other? Is it not clear that the first tactics are the only correct tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy, while the second are in fact purely *Osvobozhdeniye* tactics?

13. CONCLUSION. DARE WE WIN?

People who are superficially acquainted with the state of affairs in the ranks *of Russian Social-Democracy, or who judge by appearances* without knowing the whole history of our internal Party struggle since the days of Economism, very often dismiss even the tactical disagreements which have now become crystallized, especially after the Third Congress, by arguing that there are two natural, inevitable and quite reconcilable trends in every Social-Democratic movement. One side, they say, lays special emphasis on the ordinary, current, everyday work, on the necessity of developing propaganda and agitation, of preparing forces, deepening the movement, etc., *while the other side lays emphasis on the militant*, general political, revolutionary tasks of the movement, pointing out the necessity of armed insurrection and of advancing the slogans: for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, for a provisional revolutionary government. Neither side should exaggerate, they say; extremes are bad, both here and there (and, generally speaking, everywhere in the world), etc., etc.

But the cheap truths of worldly (and "political" *in quotation marks*) wisdom, which are undoubtedly contained in such arguments, too often cover up a failure to understand the urgent and acute needs of the Party. *Take the present differences among the Russian Social-Democrats on the* question of tactics. Of course, the special emphasis laid on the everyday, routine aspect of the work, such as we observe in the new *Iskra*-ite arguments *about tactics, could not in itself present any danger and would not* give rise to any difference of opinion regarding tactical slogans. But the moment you compare the resolutions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party with the resolutions of the Conference this difference becomes strikingly obvious.

What, then, is the trouble? The trouble is that, in the first place, it is not enough to point abstractly to the two trends in the movement and to the harmfulness of extremes. You must know concretely what the given movement is suffering from at the given time, what constitutes the real political danger to the Party at the present time. Secondly, you must know what real political forces are profiting by this or that tactical slogan—or perhaps the absence of this or that slogan. To listen to the new *Iskra*-ites, one would arrive at the conclusion that the Social-Democratic Party is faced with the danger of throwing overboard propaganda and agitation, the economic struggle and criticism of bourgeois democracy, of being inordinately absorbed in military preparations, armed attacks, the seizure of power, etc. Actually, however, real danger is threatening the Party from an entirely different quarter. Anyone who is more or less closely familiar with the state of the movement, anyone who follows it carefully and intelligently, cannot fail to see the ridiculous side of the new *Iskra's* fears. The entire work of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has already been fully moulded into solid, immutable forms which absolutely guarantee that our main

attention will be fixed on propaganda and agitation, impromptu and mass meetings, the distribution of leaflets and pamphlets, assisting in the economic struggle and championing the slogans of that struggle. There is not a single committee of the Party, not a single district committee, not a single central delegates' meeting or a single factory group where ninety-nine per cent of all the attention, energy and time are not always and constantly devoted to these functions, which have become firmly established ever since the middle of the nineties of the last century. Only those who are entirely unfamiliar with the movement do not know this. Only very naive or ill-informed people can take the new *Iskra*-ites seriously when they, with an air of great importance, repeat stale truths.

The fact is that not only is no excessive zeal displayed among us with regard to the tasks of insurrection, to the general political slogans and to the matter of leading the popular revolution in its entirety, but, on the contrary, it is *backwardness* in this very respect that stands out most strikingly, constitutes our weakest spot and a real danger to the movement, which may degenerate and in some places is degenerating into a movement no longer revolutionary in deeds, but only in words. Among the many hundreds of organizations, groups and circles carrying on the work of the Party you will not find a single one which has not carried on, from its very inception, the kind of everyday work about which the wiseacres of the new *Iskra* now talk with the air of people who have discovered new truths. On the other hand, you will find only an insignificant percentage of groups and circles that have understood the tasks which an armed uprising entails, have begun to carry them out, and have realized the necessity of leading the popular revolution against tsarism, the necessity of advancing for that purpose certain definite progressive slogans and no other.

We are incredibly behind in our progressive and genuinely revolutionary tasks, in very many instances we have not even become conscious of them; here and there we have failed to notice the strengthening of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy owing to our backwardness in this respect. But the writers in the new *Iskra*, *turning their backs on the course of events* and on the requirements of the times, keep repeating insistently: Don't forget the old! Don't let yourselves be carried away by the new! This is the principal and unvarying *leitmotif* of all the important resolutions of the Conference; whereas in the Congress resolutions you just as unvaryingly read: while confirming the old (and without stopping to chew it over and over, for the very reason that it is old and has already been settled and recorded in literature, in resolutions and by experience) we put forward a new task, draw attention to it, issue a new slogan, and demand that the genuinely revolutionary Social-Democrats immediately set to work to put it into effect.

That is how matters really stand with regard to the question of the two trends in Social-Democratic tactics. The revolutionary period has called forth new tasks, which only the totally blind can fail to see. And some

Social-Democrats unhesitatingly recognize these tasks and place them on the order of the day, declaring: the armed uprising brooks no delay, prepare yourselves for it immediately and energetically, remember that it is indispensable for a decisive victory, issue the slogans calling for a republic, for a provisional government, for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Others, however, draw back, mark time, write prefaces instead of giving slogans; instead of pointing out the new while confirming the old, they chew on this old tediously and at great length, inventing pretexts to avoid the new, unable to determine the requisites for a decisive victory or to issue the slogans which alone are in line with the striving to attain complete victory.

The political result of this *khvostism* stares us in the face. The fairy-tale about a rapprochement between the "Majority" of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and the revolutionary bourgeois democracy remains a fable which has not been confirmed by a single political fact, by a single important resolution of the "Bolsheviks" or a single act of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. On the other hand, the opportunist, monarchist bourgeoisie, as represented by the *Osvobozhdeniye*, has for a long time past been *welcoming* the "principles" of new *Iskra*-ism and now it is actually running its mill with the grist which the latter bring, is adopting their catchwords and "ideas" directed against "secrecy" and "riots," against exaggerating the "technical" side of the revolution, against openly proclaiming the slogan calling for an armed uprising, against the "revolutionism" of extreme demands, etc., etc. The resolution of a whole conference of "Menshevik" Social-Democrats in the Caucasus and the endorsement of that resolution by the editors of the new *Iskra* sums it all up politically in an unmistakable way; the bourgeoisie might recoil if the proletariat takes part in a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship! This sums it up in a nutshell. This gives the finishing touch to the transformation of the proletariat into an appendage of the monarchist bourgeoisie. The *political meaning* of the *khvostism* of the new *Iskra* is thereby proved in fact, not by a casual declaration of some individual, but by a resolution especially endorsed by a whole trend.

Anyone who ponders over these facts will understand the real significance of the stock reference to the two sides and the two trends in the Social-Democratic movement. For a study of these trends on a large scale, take Bernsteinism. The Bernsteinians have been dinning into our ears in exactly the same way that it is they who understand the true needs of the proletariat, the tasks connected with the growth of its forces, with rendering the entire activity more profound, with preparing the elements of a new society, with propaganda and agitation! Bernstein says: we demand a frank recognition of what is. And thus he sanctions a "movement" *without* "final aims," sanctions defensive tactics only, preaches the tactics of fear "lest the bourgeoisie recoil." The Bernsteinians also raised an outcry against the "Jacobinism" of the revolutionary Social-Democrats, against the "publicists" who

fail to understand the "initiative of the workers," etc., etc. In reality, as everyone knows, the revolutionary Social-Democrats never even thought of abandoning the everyday, petty work, the mustering of forces, etc., etc. All they demanded was a clear understanding of the final aim, a clear presentation of the revolutionary tasks; they wanted to raise the semi-proletariat and lower middle classes to the revolutionary level of the proletariat, not to debase the revolutionary spirit of the latter to the level of opportunist considerations such as "lest the bourgeoisie recoil." Perhaps the most graphic expression of this rift between the intellectual opportunist wing and the proletarian revolutionary wing of the Party was the question: *dürfen wir siegen?* "Dare we win?" Is it permissible for us to win? Would not victory be dangerous to us? Ought we to win? This question, which seems so strange at first sight, was raised, however, and had to be raised, because the opportunists were afraid of victory, were frightening the proletariat away from it, were predicting that trouble would come of it, were ridiculing the slogans bluntly calling for victory.

The same fundamental division between the intellectual-opportunist trend and the proletarian-revolutionary trend exists also among us, with the very material difference, however, that here we are faced with the question of a democratic revolution, and not of a Socialist revolution. The question "dare we win?" which is so absurd at first sight, has been raised among us also. It was raised by Martynov in his *Two Dictatorships,* in which he prophesied dire misfortune if we make effective preparations for and successfully carry out an uprising. The question has been raised in all the new *Iskra* literature dealing with a provisional revolutionary government, and, in this connection, all the time persistent though futile efforts have been made to liken Millerand's participation in a bourgeois-opportunist government to Varlin's participation in a petty-bourgeois revolutionary government. It is embodied in a resolution: "lest the bourgeoisie recoil". And although Kautsky, for instance, now tries to wax ironical about our disputes concerning a provisional revolutionary government, and says that it is like dividing the skin of a bear before the bear has been killed, this irony only proves that even intelligent and revolutionary Social-Democrats are liable to put their foot in it when they talk about something they know of only by hearsay. German Social-Democracy is still a long way from killing its bear (carrying out a Socialist revolution), but the dispute as to whether we "dare" kill the bear was of enormous importance from the point of view of principles and of practical politics. Russian Social-Democrats are still far from being strong enough to "kill their bear" (to carry out a democratic revolution), but the question as to whether we "dare" kill it is of extreme importance for the whole future of Russia and for the future of Russian Social-Democracy. An army cannot be energetically and successfully mustered and led unless we are sure that we "dare" win.

Take our old Economists. They too raised an outcry that their opponents were conspirators, Jacobins (see *Rabocheye Dyelo,* especially No. 10, and

Martynov's speech in the debate on the program at the Second Congress), that by plunging into politics they were divorcing themselves from the *masses, that they were losing sight of the fundamentals* of the labour movement, ignoring the initiative of the workers, etc., etc. In reality these supporters of "the initiative of the workers" were opportunist intellectuals who tried to foist on the workers their own narrow and philistine conception of the tasks of the proletariat. In reality the opponents of Economism, as everyone can see from the old *Iskra*, did not neglect or push into the background any of the phases of Social-Democratic work, nor did they forget the economic struggle in the slightest; but at the same time they were able *to present the urgent and immediate political tasks in their full scope, and* to oppose the transformation of the party of the workers into an "economic" appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie.

The Economists had learned by rote that politics are based on economics and "understood" this to mean that the political struggle should be reduced to an economic struggle. The new *Iskra*-ites have learned by rote that the economic basis of the democratic revolution is the bourgeois revolution, and "understood" this to mean that the democratic aims of the proletariat should be degraded to the level of bourgeois moderation and should not overstep the boundaries beyond which "the bourgeoisie will recoil." On the pretext of rendering their work more profound, on the pretext of rousing *the initiative of the workers and pursuing a pure class policy, the Economists* were actually delivering the working class into the hands of the liberal-bourgeois politicians, *i.e.*, were leading the Party along a path which objectively meant exactly that. The new *Iskra*-ites, using the same pretexts, are in fact betraying the interests of the proletariat in the democratic revolution to the bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, are leading the Party along a path which objectively means exactly that. The Economists thought that leadership of the political struggle was no concern of the Social-Democrats but properly the business of the liberals. The new *Iskra*-ites think that active management of the democratic revolution is no concern of the Social-Democrats but properly the business of the democratic bourgeoisie, for. they argue, if the proletariat takes a pre-eminent part in the revolution and leads it, this will "diminish the sweep" of the revolution.

In short, the new *Iskra*-ites are the epigones of Economism, not only by virtue of their *origin at the Second Party Congress, but also by their present* manner of presenting the tactical tasks of the proletariat in the democratic revolution. They, too, represent an intellectual-opportunist wing of the Party. In the sphere of organization they began with the anarchist individualism of intellectuals and finished with "disorganization-as-a-process," providing in the "Rules" adopted by the Conference for the separation of the Party's publishing activities from the Party organization, an indirect and practically four-stage system of elections, a system of Bonapartist plebiscites instead of democratic representation, and finally the principle of "agreements" between the part and the whole. In Party tactics

they continued to slide down the same inclined plane. In the "plan of the Zemstvo campaign" they declared that speeches to Zemstvo-ists were "a higher type of demonstration," finding only two active forces on the political scene (on the eve of January 9!)—the government and the democratic bourgeoisie. They made the pressing problem of armament "more profound" by substituting for the direct and practical slogan to take to arms, the slogan to arm the people with a burning desire to arm themselves. The tasks connected with an armed uprising, with the establishment of a provisional government and with a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship have now been distorted and toned down by them in their official resolutions. "Lest the bourgeoisie recoil"—this final chord of their last resolution throws a glaring light on the question of where their path is leading the Party.

The democratic revolution in Russia is a bourgeois revolution by reason of its social and economic content. But a mere repetition of this correct Marxian proposition is not enough. It must be properly understood and properly applied in political slogans. In general, all political liberties that are founded on present-day, *i.e.*, capitalist, relations of production are bourgeois liberties. The demand for liberties expresses primarily the interests of the bourgeoisie. The representatives of the bourgeoisie were the first to raise this demand. Its supporters have everywhere used the liberties they acquired, like masters, reducing them to moderate and meticulous bourgeois doses, combining them with the most subtle methods of suppressing the revolutionary proletariat in peaceful times and with brutally cruel methods in times of stress.

But only the rebel Narodniks, the anarchists and the "Economists" could deduce from this that the struggle for liberty should be rejected or disparaged. These intellectual-philistine doctrines could be foisted on the proletariat only for a time and against its will. The proletariat always realized instinctively that it needed political liberty, needed it more than anyone else, despite the fact that its immediate effect would be to strengthen and to organize the bourgeoisie. It is not by avoiding the class struggle that the proletariat expects to find its salvation but by developing it, by extending its scope, increasing the conscious elements in the struggle, its organization and determination. The Social-Democrat who disparages the tasks of the political struggle becomes transformed from a tribune of the people into a trade union secretary. The Social-Democrat who disparages the proletarian tasks in a democratic bourgeois revolution becomes transformed from a leader of the people's revolution into a leader of a free labour union.

Yes, the *people's* revolution. Social-Democracy has always fought quite justifiably against the bourgeois-democratic abuse of the word "people." It demands that this word shall not be used to cover up the failure to understand the class antagonisms within the people. It insists categorically on the need for complete class independence for the party of the proletariat. But it divides the "people" into "classes," not in order that the advanced class may become self-centred, or confine itself to narrow aims and emascu-

late its activity out of the *consideration that the economic rulers of the* world might be frightened away, but in order that the advanced class, which does not suffer from the half-heartedness, vacillation and indecision of the intermediate classes, may with all the greater energy and enthusiasm fight *for the cause of the whole of the people, at the head of the* whole of the people.

That is what the present-day new *Iskra*-ites so often fail to understand and why they substitute for active political slogans in the democratic revolution *a mere pedantic repetition of the word "class," parsed in all genders* and cases!

The democratic revolution is a bourgeois revolution. The slogan of a *Black Redistribution, or "land and liberty"—this most widespread slogan of the peasant masses, downtrodden and ignorant, yet passionately yearning* for light and happiness—is a bourgeois slogan. But we Marxists should know that there is not, nor can there be, any other path to real freedom for the proletariat and the peasantry, than the path of bourgeois freedom *and bourgeois progress. We must not forget that there is not, nor can there* be, at the present time, any other means of bringing Socialism nearer, than complete political liberty, than a democratic republic, than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. As the representatives *of the advanced and only revolutionary class, revolutionary* without reservations, doubts or retrospection, we must present to the whole of the people the aims of a democratic revolution as widely and as boldly as possible, displaying the utmost initiative. In the sphere of theory, to disparage *these aims means to make a caricature of* Marxism, *to distort it in* philistine fashion, while in the sphere of practical politics it means delivering the cause of the revolution into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which will inevitably recoil from the task of consistently carrying out the revolution. The difficulties that lie on the road to complete victory of the revolution are enormous. No one could blame the representatives of the proletariat if, having done everything in their power, their efforts were defeated by the resistance of the reaction, the treachery of the bourgeoisie *and the* ignorance of the masses. But everybody, and the class-conscious proletariat above all, will condemn Social-Democracy if it curtails the revolutionary energy of the democratic revolution and dampens the revolutionary ardour *because it is afraid to win, because it is actuated by the consideration that* the bourgeoisie might recoil.

Revolutions are the locomotives of history, said Marx. Revolutions are the festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles, if judged by the narrow, philistine scale of *gradual progress. But the leaders of the revolutionary parties must* also make their aims more comprehensive and bold at such a time, so that their slogans are always in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses,

serving as a beaconlight, revealing to them our democratic and Socialist ideal in all its magnitude and splendour, and showing them the shortest and most direct route to complete, absolute and decisive victory. Let us leave to the opportunists of the *Osvobozhdeniye* bourgeoisie the task of inventing roundabout, circuitous paths of compromise out of fear of the revolution and of the direct path. If we are compelled by force to drag ourselves along such paths, we shall be able to fulfil our duty in petty, everyday work also. But let ruthless struggle first decide the choice of the path. We shall be traitors to and betrayers of the revolution if we do not use the festive energy of the masses and their revolutionary ardour in order to wage a ruthless and unflinching struggle for the direct and decisive path. Let the bourgeois opportunists contemplate the future reaction with cowardly fear. The workers will not be frightened either by the thought that the reaction promises to be terrible or by the thought that the bourgeoisie proposes to recoil. The workers are not looking forward to striking bargains, are not asking for sops; they are striving to crush the reactionary forces without mercy, *i.e.*, to set up a *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.*

Of course, greater dangers threaten the ship of our Party in stormy times than in periods of the smooth "sailing" of liberal progress, which means the painfully slow sweating of the working class by its exploiters. Of course, the tasks of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship are a thousand times more difficult and more complicated than the tasks of an "extreme opposition" or of exclusively parliamentary struggle. But whoever can deliberately prefer smooth sailing and the path of safe "opposition" in the present revolutionary situation had better abandon Social-Democratic work for a while, had better wait until the revolution is over, when the festive days will have passed, when humdrum everyday life starts again and his narrow routine standards no longer strike such an abominably discordant note, or constitute such an ugly distortion of the tasks of the progressive class.

At the head of the whole of the people, and particularly of the peasantry—for complete freedom, for a consistent democratic revolution, for a republic! At the head of all the toilers and the exploited—for Socialism! Such must in practice be the policy of the revolutionary proletariat, such is the class slogan which must permeate and determine the solution of every tactical problem, of every practical step of the workers' party during the revolution.

POSTSCRIPT

ONCE AGAIN *OSVOBOZHDENIYE*-ISM, ONCE AGAIN NEW *ISKRA*-ISM

Numbers 71-72 of the *Osvobozhdeniye* and Nos. 102-103 of the *Iskra* provide a wealth of additional material on the question to which we have devoted Chapter 8 of our pamphlet. Since it is quite impossible to make use of the whole of this rich material here, we shall confine ourselves to the most important points only: first, to the kind of "realism" in Social-Democracy that is praised by the *Osvobozhdeniye* and why the latter must *praise* it; secondly, to the interrelationship between the concepts revolution and dictatorship.

I. WHAT DO THE BOURGEOIS LIBERAL REALISTS PRAISE THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC "REALISTS" FOR?

The articles entitled "The Split in Russian Social-Democracy" and "The Triumph of Common Sense" (*Osvobozhdeniye* No. 72) set forth the opinion on Social-Democracy held by the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie, an opinion which is of remarkable value for class-conscious proletarians. We cannot too strongly recommend every Social-Democrat to read these articles in full and to *pore over* every sentence in them. We shall reproduce first of all the most important propositions contained in both these articles:

> "It is fairly difficult," writes the *Osvobozhdeniye*, "for an outside observer to grasp the real political meaning of the differences that have split the Social-Democratic Party into two factions. A definition of the 'Majority' faction as the more radical and unswerving, as distinct from the 'Minority' which allows of certain compromises in the interests of the cause, would not be quite exact, and in any case would not provide an exhaustive characterization. At any rate the traditional dogmas of Marxian orthodoxy are observed by the Minority faction with even greater zeal perhaps than by the Lenin faction. The following characterization would appear to us to be more accurate. The fundamental political temper of the 'Majority' is abstract revolution-

ism, rebellion for the sake of rebellion, an eagerness to stir up an uprising among the popular masses by any available means and to seize power immediately in their name; to a certain extent this brings the 'Leninists' close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and overshadows the idea of the class struggle in their minds with the idea of a Russian revolution involving the whole people; while abjuring in practice much of the narrow-mindedness of the Social-Democratic doctrine, the 'Leninists' are, on the other hand, thoroughly imbued with the narrow-mindedness of revolutionism, renounce all practical work except the preparation of an immediate uprising, ignore on principle all forms of legal and semi-legal agitation and every species of practically useful compromise with other oppositional trends. The Minority, on the contrary, while steadfastly adhering to the doctrine of Marxism, at the same time preserves the realistic elements of the Marxian world outlook. The fundamental idea of this faction is to oppose the interests of the 'proletariat' to the interests of the bourgeoisie. But, on the other hand, the struggle of the proletariat is conceived—of course within certain bounds set by the immutable dogmas of Social-Democracy—in realistically sober fashion, with a clear realization of all the concrete conditions and aims of this struggle. Neither of the two factions pursues its basic point of view quite consistently, for in their ideological and political activity they are bound by the strict formulae of the Social-Democratic catechism, which keep the 'Leninists' from becoming unqualified putschists after the fashion of certain, at least, of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the '*Iskra*-ites' from becoming the practical leaders of a real political movement of the working class."

And, after quoting the contents of the most important resolutions, the *Osvobozhdeniye* writer goes on to illustrate his general "thoughts" with several concrete remarks about them. In comparison with the Third Congress, he says, "the Minority Conference takes a totally different attitude towards armed insurrection." "In connection with the attitude towards armed insurrection," there is a difference in the respective resolutions on a provisional government. "A similar difference is revealed with regard to the workers' trade unions. The 'Leninists' do not breathe a single word in their resolution about this most important starting point in the political education and organization of the working class. The Minority, on the other hand, drew up a very weighty resolution." With regard to the liberals, both factions, he says, are unanimous but the Third Congress "repeats almost word for word Plekhanov's resolution on the attitude towards the liberals adopted at the Second Congress and rejects Starovyer's resolution adopted by the same Congress, which called for a more favourable attitude to the liberals." Although the Congress and the Conference resolutions on the peasant movement are in agreement on the whole, "the 'Majority'

lays more emphasis on the idea of the revolutionary confiscation of the estates of the landlords and other land, while the 'Minority' *wants to* make the demand for democratic state and administrative reforms the basis of its agitation."

Finally, the *Osvobozhdeniye* cites from the *Iskra*, No. 100, a Menshevik resolution, the main clause of which reads as follows:

> "In view of the fact that at the present time underground work alone does not secure adequate participation of the masses in Party life and in some degree leads to the masses as such being contrasted to the Party as an illegal organization, the latter must assume leadership of the trade union struggle of the workers on a legal basis, strictly linking up this struggle with the Social-Democratic tasks." In commenting on this resolution the *Osvobozhdeniye* exclaims:
>
> "We heartily welcome this resolution as a triumph of common sense, as evidence that a definite section of the Social-Democratic Party is beginning to see the light with regard to tactics."

The reader now has before him all the essential opinions of the *Osvobozhdeniye.* It would, of course, be the greatest mistake to regard these opinions as correct in the sense of corresponding to objective truth. Every Social-Democrat will easily detect mistakes in them at every step. It would be naive to forget that these opinions are thoroughly permeated with the interests and views of the liberal bourgeoisie, and that accordingly they are utterly biased and tendentious. They reflect the views of the Social-Democrats in the same way as a concave or convex mirror reflects objects. But it would be an even greater mistake to forget that in the final analysis these bourgeois-distorted opinions reflect the real interests of the bourgeoisie, which, as a class, undoubtedly understands correctly what trends in Social-Democracy are advantageous, close, akin and agreeable, and what trends are harmful, distant, alien and antipathetic, to it. No bourgeois philosopher or bourgeois publicist can ever understand Social-Democracy properly, be it the Menshevik or the Bolshevik variety. But if he is a more or less sensible publicist, his class instinct will not deceive him, and he will always grasp, on the whole correctly, the significance for the bourgeoisie of one or another trend in the Social-Democratic movement, although he may present it in a distorted way. That is why the class instinct of our enemy, his class opinion, is always deserving of the most serious attention on the part of every class-conscious proletarian.

What, then, does the class instinct of the Russian bourgeoisie as expressed by the *Osvobozhdentsi*, tell us?

It quite definitely expresses its satisfaction with the trend represented by the new *Iskra*, praising it for its realism, sobriety, the triumph of common sense, the seriousness of its resolutions, its beginning to see the light on questions of tactics, its practicalness, etc.—and it expresses dissatisfaction with the trend of the Third Congress, censuring it for narrow-minded-

ness, revolutionism, its rebel spirit, its repudiation of practically useful compromises, etc. The class instinct of the bourgeoisie suggests to it exactly what had been repeatedly proved with the help of incontrovertible facts in our literature, namely, that the new *Iskra*-ites are the opportunists and their opponents the revolutionary wing of the present-day Russian Social-Democratic movement. The liberals cannot but sympathize with the trend of the former, and cannot but censure the trend of the latter. The liberals, as the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, fully understand the advantages to the bourgeoisie of "practicalness, sobriety and seriousness" on the part of the working class, *i.e.*, of narrowing in fact its sphere of activity to the bounds of capitalism, reforms, the trade union struggle, etc. What is dangerous and terrible to the bourgeoisie is the "revolutionary narrow-mindedness" of the proletariat and its endeavour to win leadership in a popular Russian revolution to promote its own class aims.

That this is the real meaning of the word "realism" as employed by the *Osvobozhdeniye* is evident among other things from the way it was used previously by the *Osvobozhdeniye* and Mr. Struve. The *Iskra* itself could not but admit that *this* was the meaning of the *Osvobozhdeniye's* "realism." Take, for instance, the article entitled "It Is High Time!" in the supplement to the *Iskra* No. 73-74. The author of this article (a consistent exponent of the views of the "Marsh" at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) frankly expressed the opinion that "at the Congress Akimov played the part of a spectre of opportunism rather than of its real representative." And the Editorial Board of the *Iskra* was forthwith obliged to correct the author of the article "It Is High Time!" by stating in a footnote:

> "We cannot agree with this opinion. Comrade Akimov's views on the program bear the clear imprint of opportunism, which fact is admitted even by the *Osvobozhdeniye* critic, who—in one of its recent issues—stated that Comrade Akimov is an adherent of the 'realist'—read: revisionist—tendency."

Thus the *Iskra* itself is perfectly aware that the *Osvobozhdeniye's* "realism" is simply opportunism and nothing else. If in attacking "liberal realism" (*Iskra*, No. 102) the *Iskra* now passes over in silence the fact that *it was praised by the liberals* for its realism, the explanation of this circumstance is that such praise is harder to swallow than any censure. Such praise (which the *Osvobozhdeniye* uttered not by mere chance and not for the first time) proves the affinity that exists between the realism of the liberals and those tendencies of Social-Democratic "realism" (read: opportunism) that manifest themselves in every resolution of the new *Iskra*-ites by reason of the fallacy of their whole tactical line.

Indeed, the Russian bourgeoisie has already fully revealed its inconsistency and egoism in the "popular" revolution—has revealed it in Mr. Struve's arguments and by the whole tone and content of the numerous

liberal newspapers, and by the nature of the political utterances of the bulk of the Zemstvo-ists, the bulk of the intellectuals and in general of all the adherents of Messrs. Trubetskoy, Petrunkevich, Rodichev and Co. Of course the bourgeoisie does not always clearly understand, but in general and on the whole it does grasp excellently, by reason of its class instinct, that, on the one hand, the proletariat and the "people" are useful for *its* revolution as cannon fodder, as a battering-ram against the autocracy, but that, on the other hand, the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry will be terribly dangerous to it if they win a "decisive victory over tsarism" and carry the democratic revolution to completion. That is why the bourgeoisie strains every effort to the end that the proletariat should be satisfied with a "modest" role in the revolution, that it should be more sober, practical and realistic, that its activity should be circumscribed by the principle, "lest the bourgeoisie recoil."

The bourgeois intellectuals know full well that they will not be able to get rid of the working-class movement. That is why they do not come out against the working-class movement, they do not come out against the class struggle of the proletariat—no, they even pay lip service to the right to strike, to a genteel class struggle, understanding the working-class movement and the class struggle in the Brentano or Hirsch-Duncker sense. In other words they are fully prepared to "yield" to the workers the right to strike and to organize in trade unions (which has already in fact been practically won by the workers themselves), provided the workers renounce their "rebelliousness," their "narrow-minded revolutionism," their hostility to "practically useful compromises," their claims and aspirations to put the imprint of *their* class struggle on the "popular Russian revolution," the imprint of proletarian consistency, proletarian determination and "plebeian Jacobinism." That is why the bourgeois intellectuals all over Russia exert every effort, resorting to thousands of ways and means—books,* lectures, speeches, talks, etc., etc.—to imbue the workers with the ideas of (bourgeois) sobriety, (liberal) practicalness, (opportunist) realism, (Brentano) class struggle, (Hirsch-Duncker) trade unions, etc. The latter two slogans are particularly convenient for the bourgeois of the "Constitutional-Democratic" or the *Osvobozhdeniye* party, since outwardly they coincide with the Marxian slogans, since with a few small omissions and some slight distortions they can easily be confused with and sometimes even passed off for Social-Democratic slogans. For instance, the legal liberal newspaper *Rassvyet* [*Dawn*] (which we hope some day to discuss in greater detail with the readers of the *Proletary*) frequently says such "bold" things about the class struggle, about the possible deception of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, about the working-class movement, about the initiative of the proletariat, etc., etc., that the inattentive reader or an unenlightened worker might easily be led to believe that its "social-democratism" is genuine.

* *Cf.* Prokopovich, *The Labour Question in Russia*

revolution as well. Therefore, while not ignoring the trade union movement, while not refusing to take advantage of even the slightest legal possibilities, you must, in a revolutionary period, make your prime tasks an armed uprising and the formation of a revolutionary army and a revolutionary *government as being the only way to complete victory of the* people over tsarism, to the attainment of a democratic republic and real political liberty.

It would be superfluous to speak about the half-hearted and inconsistent stand, which, naturally, is so pleasing to the bourgeoisie, that the new *Iskra*-ite resolutions took on this question because of their erroneous "line."

II. COMRADE MARTYNOV RENDERS THE QUESTION "MORE PROFOUND" AGAIN

Let us pass on to Martynov's articles in Nos. 102 and 103 of the *Iskra*. We shall, of course, make no reply to Martynov's attempts to prove the incorrectness of our and the correctness of his interpretation of a number of citations from Engels and Marx. These attempts are so trivial, Martynov's subterfuges are so obvious and the question is so clear that it would be of no interest to dwell on this point again. Every thinking reader can easily see through the simple wiles employed by Martynov in his retreat all along the line, particularly after the appearance of the complete translation of Engels' pamphlet *The Bakuninists at Work* and Marx's *Address of the Central Council to the Communist League* of March 1850, on the preparation of which a group of collaborators of the *Proletary* are now working. A single quotation from Martynov's article will suffice to make *his retreat clear to the reader.*

> "The *Iskra* 'admits,'" says Martynov in No. 103, "that the establishment of a provisional government is one of the possible and expedient ways of furthering the revolution, and denies the expediency of the participation of Social-Democrats in a *bourgeois* provisional government, precisely in the interests of a complete seizure of the state machine, in the future for a Social-Democratic revolution."

In other words, the *Iskra* now admits the absurdity of all its fears concerning the responsibility of a revolutionary government for the Treasury and the banks, concerning the danger and impossibility of taking over the "prisons," etc. But the *Iskra* is only muddling things as of old, confusing democratic with Socialist dictatorship. *This muddle is unavoidable,* it is a means to cover up the retreat.

But among the muddle-heads of the new *Iskra* Martynov stands out as a muddle-head of the first order, as a muddle-head of talent, if we may say so. Confusing the question by his laborious efforts to render it "more profound," he thereby almost invariably "arrives at" new formulations

which show up splendidly the entire falsity of the stand he has taken. You will remember how in the days of Economism he rendered Plekhanov "more profound" and created the formulation: "economic struggle against the employers and the government." It would be difficult to find in all the literature of the Economists a more apt expression of the entire falsity of this trend. It is the same today. Martynov zealously serves the new *Iskra* and almost every time he opens his mouth he furnishes us with new and excellent material for an evaluation of the new *Iskra's* false position. In No. 102 (p. 3, col. 2) he says that Lenin "has imperceptibly substituted 'dictatorship' for 'revolution.' "

As a matter of fact all the accusations levelled at us by the new *Iskra*-ites can be reduced to this one. And how grateful we are to Martynov for this accusation! What an invaluable service he renders us in the struggle against the new *Iskra* ideas by formulating his accusation in this way! We must positively beg the editors of the *Iskra* to let Martynov loose against us more often for the purpose of rendering the attacks on the *Proletary* "more profound" and for a "truly principled" formulation of these attacks. For the more Martynov strains to argue on the plane of principles, the worse are the results he gets, and the more clearly does he reveal the gaps in the new *Iskra* ideas, the more successfully does he perform on himself and on his friends the useful pedagogical operation: *reductio ad absurdum* (reducing the principles of the new *Iskra* to the absurd).

The *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* "substitute" the concept of dictatorship for that of revolution. The *Iskra* does not want such a "substitution." Just so, most esteemed Comrade Martynov! You have unwittingly stated a great truth. With this *new* formulation you have confirmed our contention that the *Iskra* is dragging at the tail of the revolution, is straying into an *Osvobozhdeniye* formulation of its tasks, whereas the *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* are issuing slogans that lead the democratic revolution forward.

You don't understand this, Comrade Martynov? In view of the importance of the question we shall try to give you a detailed explanation.

The bourgeois nature of a democratic revolution expresses itself, among other things, in the fact that a number of classes, groups and sections of society, whose stand is based entirely on the recognition of private property and commodity production, and which are incapable of going beyond these bounds, are led by force of circumstances to recognize the inefficacy of the autocracy and of the whole feudal order in general, and join in the demand for liberty. The bourgeois nature, however, of *this* liberty, which is demanded by "society" and advocated in a flood of words (and words only!) by the landowners and the capitalists, is manifesting itself more and more clearly. At the same time the radical difference between the struggle of the workers for liberty and the struggle of the bourgeoisie, between proletarian and liberal democratism, becomes ever more obvious. The working

class and its class-conscious representatives are marching in the van of this struggle and urging it forward, not only without fearing to carry it to completion, but aspiring to go far beyond the uttermost limits of the democratic revolution. The bourgeoisie is inconsistent and self-seeking, and accepts the slogans calling for liberty only in part and hypocritically. All *attempts to draw a particular line or to draw up particular "points"* (like the points in Starovyer's or the Conferencers' resolution) beyond which begins this hypocrisy of the bourgeois friends of liberty, or, if you like, this betrayal of liberty by its bourgeois friends, are unavoidably doomed to failure; for the bourgeoisie, caught between two fires (the autocracy and the proletariat), is capable of changing its position and slogans by a thousand ways and means, adapting itself by moving an inch to the Left or an inch to the Right, constantly bargaining and dickering. The task of proletarian democratism does not consist in inventing such dead "points," but in unceasingly passing judgment on the developing political situation, in exposing the ever new and unforeseen inconsistencies and betrayals on the part of the bourgeoisie.

Recall the history of Mr. Struve's political writings in the illegal press, the history of Social-Democracy's war with him, and you will see clearly how these tasks were carried out by Social-Democracy, the champion of proletarian democratism. Mr. Struve began with a purely Shipov slogan: "Rights and an authoritative Zemstvo" (see my article in *Zarya*, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism").* Social-Democracy exposed him and pushed him in the direction of a definitely constitutional program. When this "pushing" took effect, thanks to the particularly rapid course of revolutionary events, the struggle shifted to the *next* question of democracy: not only a constitution in general, but absolutely *universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot.* When we "captured" this new position from the "enemy" (the adoption of universal suffrage by the *Osvobozhdeniye* League) we began to press further, showing up the hypocrisy and falsity of a two-chamber system, and the fact that universal suffrage had not been fully recognized by the *Osvobozhdentsi*, *pointing to their monarchism* and showing up the huckstering nature of their democratism, or, in other words, the *selling out* of the interests of the great Russian revolution by these *Osvobozhdeniye* heroes of the money-bags.

Finally, the savage obstinacy of the autocracy, the enormous progress of the civil war and the hopelessness of the position into which the monarchists forced Russia have begun to penetrate even the thickest of skulls. The revolution has become a *fact*. It is no longer necessary to be a revolutionary to acknowledge the revolution. The autocratic government has actually been disintegrating in the sight of all. As has justly been remarked in the legal press by a certain liberal (Mr. Gredeskul), actual insubordi-

* *Cf.* Lenin, *Selected Works*, 1934, Eng ed. Vol. II.—*Ed.*

nation to this government has set in. Despite all its apparent strength the autocracy has proved impotent; the events attending the developing revolution have simply begun to brush aside this parasitic organism which is rotting alive. The liberal bourgeois, compelled to base their activity (or, to put it more correctly, their political wire-pulling) on relationships as they are actually taking shape, *have begun to realize the necessity of recognizing the revolution*. They do so not because they are revolutionaries; but despite the fact that they are not revolutionaries. They do so of necessity and against their will, viewing the successes of the revolution with an angry eye, accusing the autocracy of being revolutionary because it does not want to strike a deal, but wants to fight it out to a finish. Born hucksters, they hate struggle and revolution, but circumstances force them to tread the ground of revolution, for there is no other ground under their feet.

We are witnessing a highly instructive and highly comic spectacle. The bourgeois liberal prostitutes are trying to drape themselves in the toga of revolution. The *Osvobozhdentsi—risum teneatis, amici*!*—the *Osvobozhdentsi* are beginning to hold forth in the name of the revolution! The *Osvobozhdentsi* are beginning to make assurances that they "do not fear revolution" (Mr. Struve in the *Osvobozhdeniye* No. 72)!!! The *Osvobozhdentsi* are voicing their claims "to be at the head of the revolution"!!!

This is an exceptionally noteworthy phenomenon, characterizing not only the progress of bourgeois liberalism, but even more so the progress of the real successes of the revolutionary movement, which has *compelled* recognition. Even the bourgeoisie is beginning to feel that it is more advantageous to take its stand on the side of the revolution—so shaky is the autocracy. On the other hand, however, this phenomenon, which testifies to the fact that the entire movement has risen to a new and higher plane, at the same time sets us new and higher aims. The recognition of the revolution on the part of the bourgeoisie cannot be sincere, irrespective of the personal integrity of this or that bourgeois ideologist. The bourgeoisie cannot help introducing selfishness and inconsistency, the spirit of bargaining and petty reactionary tricks even into this higher stage of the movement. Now we must *differently* formulate the immediate *concrete* tasks of the revolution, in line with our program and enlarging upon it. What was adequate yesterday is *inadequate today*. Yesterday, perhaps, the demand for the recognition of the revolution was adequate as an advanced democratic slogan. Today this is not enough. The revolution has forced even Mr. Struve to recognize it. Today what is demanded of the advanced class is to define exactly *the very content* of the urgent and pressing tasks of this revolution. Messrs. the Struves, while recognizing the revolution, stick out their donkeys' ears again and again, once more striking up the old song about the possibility of a peaceful outcome, about having *Nicholas* call on the *Os-*

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vobozhdentsi to take power, etc., etc. The *Osvobozhdentsi* recognize the revolution in order to juggle it without danger to themselves, in order to betray it. It is our job at the present time to show the proletariat and the whole people the inadequacy of the slogan: "Revolution"; we must show how necessary it is to have a clear and unambiguous, consistent and determined definition of *the content* of the revolution. And this definition is provided by the one slogan capable of correctly expressing a "decisive victory" of the revolution, the slogan: for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

We *have shown that the Osvobozhdentsi are ascending* (*not without being* prodded by the Social-Democrats) step by step in the matter of recognizing democracy. At first the issue in the dispute between us was: the Shipov system (rights and an authoritative Zemstvo) or constitutionalism? Then it was: limited suffrage or universal suffrage? Later: recognition of the revolution or a huckster's bargain with the autocracy? Finally, now it is: recognition of the revolution without a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry or recognition of the demand for a dictatorship of these classes *in the democratic revolution?* It is possible and even probable *that* the *Osvobozhdentsi* (it does not matter whether they be the present ones or their successors in the Left wing of the bourgeois-democratic movement) will ascend another step, *i.e.*, recognize in time (perhaps by the time Comrade Martynov goes up one more step) the slogan of dictatorship also. It will inevitably be so if the Russian revolution continues to forge ahead successfully and attains a decisive victory. What will be the position of Social-Democracy then? The complete victory of the present revolution will be the end of the democratic revolution and the beginning of a determined struggle for a Socialist revolution. The satisfaction of the demands of the present-day peasantry, the complete smashing of reaction, and the attainment of a democratic republic will mark the end of the revolutionism of the bourgeoisie and even of the petty bourgeoisie—will be the beginning of the real struggle on the part of the proletariat for Socialism. The more complete the democratic revolution will be, the sooner, the more widespread, the purer and the more determined will be the development of this new struggle. *The slogan calling for a "democratic" dictatorship expresses* the historically limited nature of the present revolution and the necessity of a new struggle on the basis of the new order for the complete emancipation of the working class from all oppression and all exploitation. In other words: when the democratic bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie ascends another step, when not only the revolution but the complete victory of the revolution becomes an accomplished fact, then we shall "substitute" (perhaps amid the horrified cries of new Martynovs in the future) for the *slogan of the democratic dictatorship*, the slogan of a Socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, of a complete Socialist revolution.

III. THE VULGAR BOURGEOIS REPRESENTATION OF DICTATORSHIP AND MARX'S VIEW OF IT

Mehring tells us in the notes to his edition of Marx's articles from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 1848 that one of the reproaches levelled at this newspaper by bourgeois publications was that it had allegedly demanded "the immediate introduction of a dictatorship as the sole means of achieving democracy" (Marx, *Nachlass*, Vol. III, p. 53). From the vulgar bourgeois standpoint the concepts dictatorship and democracy are mutually exclusive. With no understanding of the theory of class struggle, and accustomed as he is to seeing in the political arena only the petty squabbling of the various bourgeois circles and coteries, the bourgeois conceives dictatorship to mean the annulment of all the liberties and guarantees of democracy, tyranny of every kind, and every sort of abuse of power in the personal interests of a dictator. In point of fact, it is precisely this vulgar bourgeois view that is manifested in the writings of our Martynov, who winds up his "new campaign" in the new *Iskra* by attributing the partiality of the *Vperyod* and the *Proletary* for the slogan of dictatorship to Lenin's "being obsessed by a passionate desire to try his luck" (*Iskra*, No. 103, p. 3, col. 2). In order to explain to Martynov the concept of class dictatorship as distinct from personal dictatorship, and the aims of a democratic dictatorship as distinct from a Socialist dictatorship, it would not be amiss to dwell on the views of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

> "Every provisional organization of the state after a revolution," wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on September 14, 1848, "requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen" (the head of the Ministry after March 18, 1848) "for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of the old institutions. And while Herr Camphausen was lulling himself with constitutional illusions, the defeated party (*i.e.*, the party of reaction) strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy and in the army, and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle."

Here, Mehring justly remarks, we have in a few sentences a summary of all that was propounded in detail in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in long articles on the Camphausen Ministry. What do these words of Marx tell us? That a provisional revolutionary government *must* act dictatorially (a proposition which the *Iskra* was totally unable to grasp since it was fighting shy of the slogan of dictatorship), and that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of the old institutions (which is precisely what was clearly stated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party about the struggle against counter-revolution and what, as we have shown above, was omitted in the resolution of the Conference). Thirdly, and lastly, it follows from these

words that Marx castigated the bourgeois democrats for entertaining "constitutional illusions" in a period of revolution and open civil war. The meaning of these words becomes particularly obvious from the article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of June 6, 1848. Marx wrote:

> "A constituent national assembly must first of all be an active, revolutionary-active assembly. The Frankfurt Assembly, however, is busying itself with school exercises in parliamentarism while allowing the government to act. Let us assume that this learned council succeeds after mature consideration in working out the best possible agenda and the best possible constitution. But what is the use of the best possible agenda and of the best possible constitution, if the German governments have in the meantime placed the bayonet on the agenda?"

That is the meaning of the slogan of dictatorship. We can gauge from this what Marx's attitude would have been towards resolutions which call a "decision to organize a constituent assembly" a decisive victory, or which invite us to "remain the party of extreme revolutionary opposition!"

Major questions in the life of nations are settled only by force. The reactionary classes are usually themselves the first to resort to violence, to civil war; they are the first to "place the bayonet on the agenda" as the Russian autocracy has been doing systematically and consistently everywhere ever since January 9. And since such a situation has arisen, since the bayonet has really become the main point on the political agenda, since insurrection has proved to be imperative and urgent—constitutional illusions and school exercises in parliamentarism become only a screen for the bourgeois betrayal of the revolution, a screen to conceal the fact that the bourgeoisie is "recoiling" from the revolution. It is therefore the slogan of dictatorship that the genuinely revolutionary class must advance.

On the question of the tasks of this dictatorship Marx wrote, already in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, as follows:

> "The National Assembly had only to act dictatorially against all the reactionary attempts of the obsolete governments, and the force of public opinion which it would then have won for itself would be so great that all bayonets and rifle butts would have been splintered against it.... But this Assembly bores the German people instead of carrying the people with it or being carried away by it."

In Marx's opinion, the National Assembly should have "eliminated from the regime actually existing in Germany everything that contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the people," then it should have "consolidated the revolutionary ground on which it rested in order to make the sovereignty of the people, won by the revolution, secure against all attacks."

Thus, the tasks which Marx set before a revolutionary government or dictatorship in 1848 amounted in substance above all to a *democratic* revolution, *viz.*, defence against counter-revolution and the actual elimination

of everything that militated against the sovereignty of the people. And this is no other than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

To proceed: which classes, in Marx's opinion, could and should have achieved this task (actually to exercise to the end the principle of the sovereignty of the people and to beat off the attacks of the counter-revolution)? Marx speaks of the "people." But we know that he always ruthlessly combated the petty-bourgeois illusions about the unity of the "people" and about the absence of a class struggle within the people. In using the word "people," Marx did not thereby gloss over class differences, but united definite elements capable of carrying the revolution to completion.

After the victory of the Berlin proletariat on March 18, wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the results of the revolution proved to be twofold:

> "On the one hand the arming of the people, the right of association, the sovereignty of the people actually attained; on the other hand, the preservation of the monarchy and the Camphausen-Hansemann Ministry, *i.e.*, the government of the representatives of the upper bourgeoisie.
>
> "Thus the revolution had two series of results, which had necessarily to diverge. The people had emerged victorious, it had won liberties of a decisively democratic nature, but the direct power passed not into its hands, but into those of the big bourgeoisie. In a word, the revolution was not completed. The people allowed the formation of a ministry of big bourgeois, and the big bourgeois immediately betrayed their tendencies by offering an alliance to the old Prussian nobility and bureaucracy. Arnim, Canitz and Schwerin joined the Ministry.
>
> "*The upper bourgeoisie, ever anti-revolutionary, concluded a defensive and offensive alliance with the reaction out of fear of the people, that is to say, the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie.*" (Our italics.)

Thus, not only a "decision to organize a constituent assembly," but even its actual convocation is insufficient for a decisive victory of the revolution! Even after a partial victory in an armed struggle (the victory of the Berlin workers over the troops on March 18, 1848) an "incomplete" revolution, a revolution "that has not been carried to completion," is possible. But on what does its completion depend? It depends on whose hands the immediate rule passes into, whether into the hands of the Petrunkeviches and Rodichevs, that is to say, the Camphausens and the Hansemanns, or into the hands of the *people*, *i.e.*, the workers and the democratic bourgeoisie. In the first case the bourgeoisie will possess power, and the proletariat—"freedom of criticism," freedom to "remain the party of the extreme revolutionary opposition." Immediately after the victory the bourgeoisie will conclude an alliance with the reaction (this would inevitably happen in Russia too, if, for example, the St. Petersburg workers gained only a partial

victory in the street fighting with the troops and left it to Messrs. Petrunkevich and Co. to form a government). In the second case, a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, *i.e.*, the complete victory of the revolution, would be possible.

It now remains to define more precisely what Marx really meant by "democratic bourgeoisie" (*demokratische Bürgerschaft*), which together with the workers he called the people, in contradistinction to the big bourgeoisie.

A clear answer to this question is supplied by the following passage from an article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of July 29, 1848:

> "... the German revolution of 1848 is only a parody of the French revolution of 1789.
>
> "On August 4, 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the French people in a single day prevailed over the feudal burdens.
>
> "On July 11, 1848, four months after the March barricades, the feudal burdens prevailed over the German people. *Teste Gierke cum Hansemanno.**
>
> "The French bourgeoisie of 1789 did not for a moment leave its allies, the peasants, in the lurch. It knew that the foundation of its rule was the destruction of feudalism in the countryside, the creation of a free landowning (*grundbesitzenden*) peasant class.
>
> "The German bourgeoisie of 1848 is without the least compunction betraying the peasants, who are its most natural allies, the flesh of its flesh, and without whom it is powerless against the nobility.
>
> "The continuance of feudal rights, their sanction under the guise of (illusory) redemption—such is the result of the German revolution of 1848. That is the little wool out of the great cry."

This is a very instructive passage: it gives us four important propositions: 1) The incompleted German revolution differs from the completed French revolution in that the German bourgeoisie betrayed not only democracy in general, but also the peasantry in particular. 2) The foundation for the full consummation of a democratic revolution is the creation of a free class of peasants. 3) The creation of such a class means the abolition of feudal burdens, the destruction of feudalism, but does not yet mean a Socialist revolution. 4) The peasants are the "most natural" allies of the bourgeoisie, that is to say, of the democratic bourgeoisie, which without them is "powerless" against the reaction.

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* "Witnesses: Herr Gierke and Herr Hansemann." Hansemann was a minister who represented the party of the big bourgeoisie (Russian counterpart: Trubetskoy or Rodichev, and the like), Gierke was Minister of Agriculture in the Hansemann Cabinet, who drew up a plan, a "bold" plan for "abolishing feudal burdens," professedly "without compensation," but in fact for abolishing only the minor and unimportant burdens while preserving or granting compensation for the more essential ones. Herr Gierke was something like the Russian Messrs. Kablukov, Manuilov, Hertzenstein and similar bourgeois liberal friends of the muzhik who desire the "extension of peasant landownership" but do not wish to hurt the landlords.

With the corresponding allowances for concrete national peculiarities and the substitution of serfdom for feudalism, all these propositions are fully applicable to Russia in 1905. There is no doubt that by learning from the experience of Germany, as elucidated by Marx, we cannot arrive at any other slogan for a decisive victory of the revolution than the slogan calling for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that the main components of the "people," whom Marx in 1848 contrasted with the resisting reactionaries and the treacherous bourgeoisie, are the proletariat and the peasantry. There is no doubt that in Russia too the liberal bourgeoisie and the gentlemen of the *Osvobozhdeniye* League are betraying and will continue to betray the peasantry, *i.e.*, will confine themselves to a pseudo-reform and take the side of the landlords in the decisive battle between them and the peasantry. Only the proletariat is capable of supporting the peasantry to the end in this struggle. There is no doubt, finally, that in Russia also the success of the peasant struggle, *i.e.*, the transfer of the whole of the land to the peasantry, will signify a complete democratic revolution and will constitute the social support of the revolution carried to its completion, but it will by no means signify a Socialist revolution, or "socialization," about which the ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, talk. The success of the peasant uprising, the victory of the democratic revolution will but clear the way for a genuine and decisive struggle for Socialism on the basis of a democratic republic. In this struggle the peasantry as a landowning class will play the same treacherous, vacillating part as is being played at present by the bourgeoisie in the struggle for democracy. To forget this is to forget Socialism, to deceive oneself and others as to the real interests and tasks of the proletariat.

In order to leave no gaps in the presentation of the views held by Marx in 1848, it is necessary to note one essential difference between German Social-Democracy of that time (or the Communist Party of the Proletariat, to use the language of the period) and present-day Russian Social-Democracy. Here is what Mehring says:

> "It" (the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*) "appeared in the political arena as the 'organ of democracy,' and although the red thread that ran through all its articles is unmistakable, it at first represented the interests of the bourgeois revolution against absolutism and feudalism to a greater extent than the interests of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Very little is to be found in its columns about the separate labour movement during the years of the revolution, although one should not forget that along with it there appeared twice a week, under the editorship of Moll and Schapper, a special organ of the Cologne Labour League. At any rate, the present-day reader will be struck by how little attention the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* paid to the German labour movement of its day, although its most capable mind,

> Stephan Born, was a pupil of Marx and Engels in Paris and Brussels and was now [in 1818] correspondent for their newspaper in Berlin. Born relates in his *Memoirs* that Marx and Engels never expressed a single word in disapproval of his agitation among the workers; nevertheless, it appears probable from subsequent declarations of Engels' that they were dissatisfied, at least with the methods of this agitation. Their dissatisfaction was justified inasmuch as the class consciousness of the proletariat in by far the greater part of Germany was as yet entirely undeveloped, and Born was forced to make many concessions to it, which could not stand the test of criticism from the viewpoint of the *Communist Manifesto*. Their dissatisfaction was unjustified inasmuch as Born managed nonetheless to maintain the agitation conducted by him on a relatively high plane.... Without doubt, Marx and Engels were also historically and politically right in thinking that it was to the utmost interest of the working class primarily to push the bourgeois revolution forward as far as possible.... Nevertheless, a remarkable proof of how the elementary instinct of the labour movement is able to correct the conceptions of the most brilliant thinkers is provided by the fact that in April 1849 they decided in favour of a specific workers' organization and of participation in the labour congress, which was being prepared especially by the East Elbe" (Eastern Prussia) "proletariat."

Thus, it was only in April 1849, after the revolutionary newspaper had been appearing for almost a year (the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* began publication on June 1, 1848) that Marx and Engels declared in favour of a special workers' organization! Until then they were merely running an "organ of democracy" unconnected by any organizational ties with an independent workers' party. This fact, monstrous and incredible as it may appear from our present-day standpoint, clearly shows us what an enormous difference there is between the German Social-Democratic Party of those days and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party of today. This fact shows how much less the proletarian features of the movement, the proletarian current within it, were in evidence in the German democratic revolution (because of the backwardness of Germany in 1848 both economically and politically—its disunity as a state). This should not be forgotten in judging Marx's repeated declarations during this period and somewhat later about the need for organizing an independent proletarian party. Marx arrived at this practical conclusion only as a result of the experience of the democratic revolution, almost a year later—so middle-class, so petty-bourgeois was the whole atmosphere in Germany at that time. To us this conclusion is an old and solid acquisition of half a century's experience of international Social-Democracy—an acquisition with which we *began* to organize the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. In our case there can be no question, for instance, of revolutionary proletarian newspapers

keeping outside the pale of the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat, or of their appearing even for a moment simply as "organs of democracy."

But the contrast which had hardly begun to reveal itself between Marx and Stephan Born exists in our case in a form which is the more developed, the more powerfully the proletarian current manifests itself in the democratic stream of our revolution. Speaking of the probable dissatisfaction of Marx and Engels with the agitation conducted by Stephan Born, Mehring expresses himself too mildly and too evasively. This is what Engels wrote of Born in 1885 (in his preface to the *Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozess zu Köln*. Zurich, 1885):*

The members of the Communist League everywhere stood at the head of the extreme democratic movement, proving thereby that the League was an excellent school of revolutionary action. And he went on to say:

> "...the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood (*Arbeiterverbrüderung*) in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was rather too much in a hurry to become a big political figure, fraternized with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail (*Kreti und Plethi*) in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the discordant tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the association the views represented in the *Communist Manifesto* are mingled hodge-podge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short, they desired to be all things to all men *(Allen alles sein). In particular, strikes, trade unions and producers' co-operatives were set going, and it was forgotten that what had to be done above all was, by means of political victories, to conquer the field* in which alone such things could be lastingly realized. (Our italics.) And when the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realize the necessity of taking a direct part in the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the Dresden uprising in May 1849, and got away by pure luck. But the Workers' Brotherhood held aloof from the great political movement of the proletariat, as a purely separate body which, to a large extent, existed only on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction found it necessary to suppress it only in 1850, and its surviving branches many years later. Born, whose real name should be

* *Revelations About the Trial of the Communists at Cologne. (Cf.* Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 20-21.)—*Ed.*

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NOTE TO CHAPTER 10 OF *TWO TACTICS*

Insert for § 10.

1) We would remind the reader that in the polemics between the *Iskra* and the *Vperyod*, the former referred among other things to Engels' letter to Turati, in which Engels warned the (future) leader of the Italian reformists not to confuse the democratic with the Socialist revolution. The impending revolution in Italy—wrote Engels about the political situation in Italy in 1894—will be a petty-bourgeois, democratic revolution and not a Socialist revolution. The *Iskra* reproached the *Vperyod* with having departed from the principle laid down by Engels. This reproach was unjustified, because the *Vperyod* (No. 14) fully acknowledged, in general and on the whole, the correctness of Marx's theory on the difference between the three main forces in the revolutions of the nineteenth century. According to this theory, the following forces take a stand against the old order, against the autocracy, feudalism and serfdom: 1) the liberal big bourgeoisie, 2) the radical petty bourgeoisie, 3) the proletariat. The first fights for nothing more than a constitutional monarchy; the second, for a democratic republic; the third, for a Socialist revolution. To confuse the petty-bourgeois struggle for a complete democratic revolution with the proletarian struggle for a Socialist revolution spells political bankruptcy for a Socialist. Marx's warning to this effect is quite justified. But it is for this very reason that the slogan "revolutionary communes" is erroneous, because the very mistake committed by the communes that have existed in history is that they confused the democratic revolution with the Socialist revolution. On the other hand, our slogan—a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry—fully safeguards us against this mistake. While recognizing the incontestably bourgeois nature of the revolution, which is incapable of *immediately* overstepping the bounds of a merely democratic revolution, our slogan *pushes forward* this particular revolution and strives to mould it into forms most advantageous to the proletariat; consequently, it strives to make the very most of the democratic revolution in order to attain the greatest success in the further struggle of the proletariat for Socialism.

Written in June-July 1905
First published in 1926
in the *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. V

> *Buttermilch*,* did not become a big political figure but a petty Swiss professor, who no longer translates Marx into guild language but the meek Renan into his own fulsome German."

That is how Engels judged the two tactics of Social-Democracy in the democratic revolution!

Our new *Iskra*-ites are also tending to "Economism," and with such unreasonable zeal as to earn the praises of the monarchist bourgeoisie for their "seeing the light." They too collect around themselves a motley crowd, flattering the Economists, demagogically attracting the undeveloped masses by the slogans of "self-activity," "democracy," "autonomy," etc., etc. Their *labour unions, too, often exist only on the pages of the braggart new Iskra. Their slogans and resolutions betray a similar failure to understand* the tasks of the "great political movement of the proletariat."

Originally published as a separate pamphlet in August 1905, Geneva

* Born's real name is *Buttermilch*. In translating Engels I made a mistake in the first edition by taking the word *Buttermilch* to be not a proper noun but a common noun. This mistake naturally afforded great delight to the Mensheviks. Koltzov wrote that I had "rendered Engels more profound" (*reprinted in Two Years*, a collection of articles) and Plekhanov even now recalls this mistake in the *Tovarishch*—in short, it afforded *an excellent pretext to slur over the question of the two tendencies in the working-class movement* of 1848 in Germany, the tendency of Born (*akin to our* Economists) and the Marxist tendency. To take advantage of the mistake of an opponent, even if it was only on the question of Born's name, is no more than natural. But to use a correction to a translation to slur over the question of the two tactics is to dodge the real issue. (*Author's note to the 1908 edition.—Ed.*)

tical questions involved, while we ask you comrades who are doing similar work to acquaint us with the practical knowledge your experience has given you.

We consider it necessary to inform you about the perplexity that has arisen among us upon perusal of the resolution of the Third Congress "on the attitude toward the peasant movement," and about the organizational plan which we are already beginning to apply in our work in the rural districts.

"§ a) To carry on propaganda among the broad strata of the people to the effect that Social-Democracy sets itself the task of giving most energetic support to all the revolutionary measures undertaken by the peasantry that are capable of improving its position, including confiscation of the land belonging to the landlords, the state, the church, the monasteries, and the imperial family" (from the resolution of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.).

First of all, it is not made clear in this paragraph how the Party organizations will, or should, carry on their propaganda. Propaganda requires, first and foremost, an organization which is very close to those whom it is intended to propagandize. The question as to whether this organization is to be committees consisting of the rural proletariat, or whether other organizational means of conducting oral and written propaganda may be adopted, is left open.

The same may be said of the promise to render energetic support. To render support, and energetic support at that, is also possible only if local organizations exist. The question of "energetic support" seems to us to be extremely hazy in general. Can Social-Democracy support the expropriation of those landlords' estates which are farmed most intensively, using machinery, cultivating high grade crops, etc.? The transfer of such estates to petty-bourgeois proprietors, however important it may be to improve their position, would be a step back from the standpoint of the capitalist development of the given estate. In our opinion, we, as Social-Democrats, should have made a reservation on this point of "support": "provided the expropriation of this land and its transference to peasant (petty-bourgeois) ownership results in a higher form of economic development on these estates."

Further:

"§ d) To strive for the independent organization of the rural proletariat, for its fusion with the urban proletariat under the banner of the Social-Democratic Party, and for the inclusion of its representatives in the peasant committees."

Doubts arise with regard to the latter part of this paragraph. The fact is that the bourgeois-democratic organizations, such as the "Peasant League," and reactionary-utopian organizations, such as the Socialist-Revolutionaries, organize under their banner both the

THE ATTITUDE OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY TOWARD THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

The tremendous importance of the peasant movement in the democratic revolution through which Russia is now passing has been repeatedly explained in the entire Social-Democratic press. As is well known, the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted a special resolution on this question in order to define more exactly and to co-ordinate the activities of the whole party of the class-conscious proletariat with regard to the peasant *movement of the present day. Despite the fact that the resolution was prepared* in advance (the first draft was published in the *Vperyod* No. 11, March 23 [10], 1905), despite the fact that it was carefully gone over at the Party Congress, which took pains to formulate the views that had already been established throughout the Russian Social-Democratic movement—in spite of all this, the resolution has caused perplexity among a number of comrades working in Russia. The Saratov Committee has unanimously declared this resolution to be unacceptable (see the *Proletary* No. 10). Unfortunately, the desire we expressed at the time, to receive an explanation *of that verdict, has not been satisfied as yet. We only know that* the Saratov Committee has declared the agrarian resolution passed by the new *Iskra* Conference also unacceptable—hence it is what is common to both resolutions that dissatisfies them, and not what distinguishes one from the other.

New material on this question is provided by a letter we have received from a Moscow comrade (issued in the form of a hectographed leaflet). We print this letter in full:

An Open Letter to the Central Committee and to the Comrades Working in the Rural Districts

Comrades! The regional organization of the Moscow Committee has *taken up work among the peasants. The lack of experience in organizing* such work, the special conditions prevailing in the rural districts of Central Russia, and also the lack of clarity in the directives contained in the resolutions of the Third Congress on this question and the almost complete absence of material in the periodical and other press on work among the peasantry, compel us to appeal to the Central Committee *to* send us detailed directives, covering both the principles and *the* prac-

ronment, and if we were to insist on orthodoxy and organize only the rural "proletariat," we would have to dissolve our organizations and the organizations in the neighbouring districts. We know we shall have difficulties in combating the burning desire to expropriate the arable and other land neglected by the landlords, or those lands which the holy fathers in hoods and cassocks have not been able to farm properly. We know that bourgeois democracy, from the "democratic"-monarchist faction (such a faction exists in the Ruza Uyezd) down to the "Peasant" League, will fight us for influence among the "paupers," but we shall arm the latter to oppose the former. We shall make use of all the Social-Democratic forces in the region, both intellectuals and proletarian workers, to set up and consolidate our Social-Democratic committees of "paupers." And we shall do this in accordance with the following plan. In each uyezd seat, or big industrial centre, we shall set up uyezd committees of the groups coming under the Regional Organization. The uyezd committee, in addition to setting up factory committees in its district, will also set up "peasant" committees. For reasons of secrecy, these committees should not have many people on them and should consist of the most revolutionary and capable pauperized peasants. In places where there are both factories and peasants —it is necessary to organize workers and peasants in a single subgroup committee.

In the first place, such committees should have a clear and exact idea of local conditions: A) The agrarian relationships: 1) Peasant allotments, leases, form of tenure (communal, by households, etc.). 2) The local land: a) to whom it belongs; b) the amount of land; c) what relation the peasants have to this land; d) on what terms the land is held: 1) labour rent, 2) excessive rent for "otrezki," etc.; e) indebtedness to kulaks, landlords, etc. B) Imposts, taxes, the rate of assessment of peasant and landlord lands respectively. C) Migratory and handicraft industries, passports, winter hiring,* etc. D) Local factories and plants: the working conditions in these: 1) wages, 2) working day, 3) the attitude of the management, 4) housing conditions, etc. E) The administration: the *zemsky nachalniks*, the village elder, the clerk, the volost judges, constables, priest. F) The Zemstvo: the councillors representing the peasants, the Zemstvo employees: the teacher, doctor, libraries, schools, taverns. G) Volost assemblies: their composition and procedure. H) Organizations: the "Peasant League," Socialist-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats.

Having acquainted itself with all this data, the Peasant Social-Democratic Committee is obliged to get such decisions passed by the assemblies as may be necessitated by any abnormal state of affairs.

* *Winter hiring*—In winter, when the peasants were particularly in need of money, the landlords and kulaks (rich peasants) would give them money advances on work to be performed in spring or summer, on the most extortionate terms.—*Ed.*

bourgeois and the proletarian elements of the peasantry. By electing our own representatives of the rural proletarian organizations to such "peasant" committees, we shall be contradicting ourselves, our view on entering a bloc, etc.

Here, too, we believe, amendments, and very serious ones, are needed.

These are a few general remarks on the resolutions of the Third Congress. It is desirable to have these analysed as soon and in as great detail as possible.

As regards the plan for a "rural" organization in our Regional Organization, we are obliged to work under conditions which the resolutions of the Third Congress wholly ignore. First of all, we must note that the territory we cover—the Moscow Province and the adjoining uyezds of the neighbouring Provinces—is mainly an industrial area with a relatively undeveloped system of home industries and with a very small section of the population engaged *exclusively* in agriculture. Huge textile mills, each employing 10,000 to 15,000 workers, are interspersed among small factories, employing 500 to 1,000 workers, and scattered in out-of-the-way hamlets and villages. One would think that under such conditions Social-Democracy would find a most favourable field for its activity here, but facts have proved that such a superficial premise does not hold water. Even now, in spite of the fact that some of the factories have been in existence for 40-50 years, the overwhelming majority of our "proletariat" has not become divorced from the land. The "village" has such a strong hold over it, that none of the psychological and other characteristics which a "pure" proletarian acquires in the course of collective work develop among our proletarians. The farming carried on by our "proletarians" is of a peculiar mongrel type. A weaver employed in a factory hires an agricultural labourer to till his patch of land. His wife (if she is not working in the factory), his children, and the aged and invalid members of the family work on this same piece of land, and he himself will work on it when he becomes old or crippled, or is fired for violent or suspicious behaviour. Such "proletarians" can hardly be called proletarians. Their economic status is that of paupers. Their ideology is that of petty bourgeois. They are ignorant and conservative. It is from these that the "Black-Hundred" elements are recruited. Lately, however, even among them class consciousness has begun to awaken. Using "pure" proletarians as footholds, we are endeavouring to rouse these ignorant masses from their age-long slumber, and not without success. The footholds are increasing in number, and in places are becoming firmer, the paupers are coming under our influence, are beginning to adopt our ideology, both in the factory and in the village. And we believe that it will not be unorthodox to form organizations in an environment that is not "purely" proletarian. We have no other envi-

ronment, and if we were to insist on orthodoxy and organize only the rural "proletariat," we would have to dissolve our organizations and the organizations in the neighbouring districts. We know we shall have difficulties in combating the burning desire to expropriate the arable and other land neglected by the landlords, or those lands which the holy fathers in hoods and cassocks have not been able to farm properly. We know that bourgeois democracy, from the "democratic"-monarchist faction (such a faction exists in the Ruza Uyezd) down to the "Peasant" League, will fight us for influence among the "paupers," but we shall arm the latter to oppose the former. We shall make use of all the Social-Democratic forces in the region, both intellectuals and proletarian workers, to set up and consolidate our Social-Democratic committees of "paupers." And we shall do this in accordance with the following plan. In each uyezd seat, or big industrial centre, we shall set up uyezd committees of the groups coming under the Regional Organization. The uyezd committee, in addition to setting up factory committees in its district, will also set up "peasant" committees. For reasons of secrecy, these committees should not have many people on them and should consist of the most revolutionary and capable pauperized peasants. In places where there are both factories and peasants —it is necessary to organize workers and peasants in a single subgroup committee.

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This committee should simultaneously carry on intense propaganda and agitation for the ideas of Social-Democracy among the masses, organize circles, impromptu meetings, mass meetings, distribute leaflets *and other literature, collect money for the Party and keep* in touch with the Regional Organization *through the uyezd group.*

If we succeed in setting up a number of such committees the success of Social-Democracy will be assured.

Regional Organizer

It goes without saying that we shall not undertake the task of working out the detailed practical directives to which the comrade refers: this is a *matter for the comrades on the spot and for the central body in Russia,* which is guiding the practical work. We propose to take the opportunity presented by our Moscow comrade's interesting letter to explain the resolution of the Third Congress and the urgent tasks of the Party in general. It is obvious from the letter that the perplexity caused by the resolution of the Third Congress is only partly due to theoretical doubt. The other source is the *new* question, which has not arisen before, about the interrelation between the "revolutionary peasant committees" and the "*Social-Democratic Committees*" which are working among the peasants. The very fact that this question has been raised testifies to the great progress Social-Democratic work among the peasants has made. Questions—relatively speaking—of detail are now being forced to the front by the practical requirements of "rural" agitation, which is becoming a fixed feature and assuming stable, permanent forms. And the author of the letter keeps forgetting that when he is blaming the Congress resolution for lack of clarity, he is, in fact, seeking an answer to a question which the Congress of the Party did not raise and could not have raised.

For instance, the author is not quite right when he says that both propagation of our ideas and support for the peasant movement are possible "only" if we have our organizations in the particular localities. Of course such organizations are desirable, and as the work *increases they will become necessary; but such work is possible and necessary* even where no such organizations exist. In all our activities, even when carried on exclusively among the urban proletariat, we must never lose sight of the peasant question and must broadcast the declaration made by the *whole party of the class-conscious proletariat* as represented by the Third Congress, namely, that we support the peasant uprising. The peasants must learn this—*from literature, from the workers, from special organizations, etc.* The peasants must learn that the Social-Democratic proletariat, in giving this support, will *not shrink* from any form of confiscation of the land (*i.e.*, expropriation without compensation to the owners).

The author of the letter raises a theoretical question in this connection, *viz.*, whether the demand for the expropriation *of the big estates and their* transfer *to* "*peasant, petty-bourgeois ownership*" should not be circumscribed

by a special reservation. But by proposing such a reservation the author has arbitrarily limited the purport of the resolution of the Third Congress. There is *not a word* in the resolution about the Social-Democratic Party undertaking to support the transfer of the confiscated land to petty-bourgeois proprietors. The resolution states: we support . . . "including confiscation," *i.e.*, including expropriation without compensation, but the resolution does not in any way decide to whom the expropriated land is to be given. It was not by chance that the question was left open: it is obvious from the articles in the *Vperyod* (Nos. 11, 12, 15) that it was deemed unwise to decide this question in advance. It was stated there, for instance, that under a democratic republic Social-Democracy cannot pledge itself and tie its hands with regard to the nationalization of the land.

Indeed, unlike the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries, we lay the main emphasis *at the present time* on the revolutionary-democratic aspect of the peasant uprising and the special organization of the rural proletariat into a class party. The crux of the question now is not schemes of "Black Redistribution," or nationalization, but that the peasants recognize the need of a *revolutionary* break-up of the old order and that they accomplish it. That is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries emphasize "socialization," etc., while we lay stress on *revolutionary peasant committees*. Without the latter, say we, all change amounts to nothing. With them and supported by them the *victory of the peasant uprising* is possible.

We must assist the peasant uprising in every way, including confiscation of the land, *but certainly not including all sorts of petty-bourgeois schemes*. We support the peasant movement, in so far as it is a revolutionary democratic movement. We are making ready (making ready at once, immediately) to fight against it in so far as it becomes reactionary and anti-proletarian. The whole essence of Marxism lies in that double task, which only those who do not understand Marxism can vulgarize or compress into a single and simple task.

Let us take a concrete instance. Let us assume that the peasant uprising has been victorious. The revolutionary peasant committees and the provisional revolutionary government (relying, in part, on these very committees) can proceed to the confiscation of any big property. We are in favour of confiscation, as we have already declared. But to whom shall we recommend that the confiscated land be given? On this question we have not tied our hands nor shall we ever do so by declarations like those rashly proposed by the author of the letter. The author of the letter has forgotten that the resolution of the Third Congress speaks of "*purging the revolutionary-democratic content of the peasant movement of all reactionary admixtures*"—that is one point—and, secondly, of the need "*in all cases and under all circumstances for an independent organization of the rural proletariat.*" These are our directives. There will always be reactionary admixtures in the peasant movement, and we declare war on them in advance. Class antagonism between the rural proletariat and the peasant bourgeoisie is unavoidable,

and we reveal it in advance, explain it *and prepare for the struggle on the basis of it.* One of the immediate causes of such struggle may very likely be the question: to whom shall the confiscated land be given, and how? We do not gloss over that question, nor do we promise equal distribution, "socialization," etc. What we do say is that this is a question we shall fight out later on, fight again, on a new field and with other allies. Then, we shall certainly be with the rural proletariat, with the entire working class *against* the peasant bourgeoisie. In practice, this *may* mean the transfer of the land to the class of petty peasant proprietors—wherever big estates based on bondage and feudal servitude still prevail, where there are as yet no material prerequisites for large-scale Socialist production; it may mean nationalization—provided the democratic revolution is completely victorious; or the big capitalist estates may be transferred to *workers' associations;* for from the democratic revolution we shall at once, and just in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat, begin to pass to the Socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop halfway. The reason we do not now and immediately promise all sorts of "socialization," is just because we know what is actually required for that task, and do not gloss over but reveal the new class struggle that is maturing within the ranks of the peasantry.

At first we support the peasantry in general against the landlords, support it to the end and by all means, including confiscation, and then (or rather not "then," but at the same time) we support the proletariat against the peasantry in general. To try *now* to calculate what the combination of forces will be within the peasantry on "the morrow" of the revolution (the democratic revolution) is sheer utopia. Without descending to adventurism or going against our scientific conscience, without striving for cheap popularity, we can and do say *only one thing*: we shall put every effort into assisting the entire peasantry to make the democratic revolution, *in order thereby to make it easier* for us, the Party of the proletariat, to pass on, as quickly as possible, to the new and higher task—the Socialist revolution. We hold forth no promises of harmony, equalization or "socialization" as a result of the victory of the *present* peasant uprising—on the contrary, we "promise" a new struggle, new inequality, a new revolution, toward which we are striving. Our doctrine is not as "sweet" as the fairy tales of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, but let whoever wants to be fed solely on sweets join the Socialist-Revolutionaries; we shall say to such people: good riddance.

In our opinion this Marxian standpoint also settles the question of the committees. In our opinion *there should be no Social-Democratic peasant* committees: if they are Social-Democratic that means they are not purely peasant committees; if they are peasant committees *that means they are* not purely proletarian, not Social-Democratic committees. There are many who would fain *confuse these two, but we are not of their number.* Wher-

ever possible we shall strive to set up *our* committees, committees of the *Social-Democratic Labour Party*. They will be joined by peasants, paupers, intellectuals, prostitutes (a worker recently asked us in a letter why not carry on agitation among the prostitutes), soldiers, teachers, workers—in short, *all Social-Democrats and none but Social-Democrats*. These committees will conduct the whole of Social-Democratic work, in its entire scope striving, however, to organize the rural proletariat separately and particularly, for the Social-Democratic Party is the class party of the proletariat. To consider it "unorthodox" to organize the proletariat which has not entirely freed itself from various relics of the past is a *great delusion* and we would like to think that the corresponding passages of the letter are due to a mere misunderstanding. The urban and industrial proletariat will inevitably be the basic nucleus of our Social-Democratic Labour Party, but we must attract to it, enlighten and organize all toilers and all the exploited, as is stated in our program—all without exception: handicraftsmen, paupers, beggars, servants, tramps, prostitutes—of course, subject to the necessary and obligatory condition that they join the Social-Democratic movement and not that the Social-Democratic movement join them, that they adopt the standpoint of the proletariat and not that the proletariat adopt theirs.

The reader may ask—what is the point, then, of having revolutionary peasant committees? Does this mean that they are not necessary? No, they are necessary. Our ideal is: purely Social-Democratic committees in all rural districts, and then agreements between them and *all* the revolutionary-democratic elements, groups and circles of the peasantry for the purpose of establishing revolutionary committees. There is a perfect analogy here to the independence of the Social-Democratic Labour Party in the cities and its alliance with all the revolutionary democrats for the purpose of insurrection. We are in favour of a peasant uprising. We are absolutely opposed to the mixing and merging of heterogeneous class elements and heterogeneous parties. We hold that for the purpose of insurrection Social-Democracy should give an impetus to the *whole* of revolutionary democracy, should assist the *whole* of it to organize, should *march shoulder to shoulder* with it, but without merging with it, to the barricades in the cities and against the landlords and the police in the villages.

Proletary No. 16,
September 14 [1], 1905

THE LESSONS OF THE MOSCOW UPRISING

The publication of the book *Moscow in December 1905* (Moscow, 1906) could not have been more opportune. It is an essential task of the workers' party to assimilate the lessons of the December uprising. Unfortunately, this book is like a barrel of honey spoiled by a spoonful of tar: the most interesting material—despite its incompleteness—and incredibly slovenly, incredibly trite conclusions. We shall deal with these conclusions separately, and turn our attention now to the *burning political question of the day*, to the lessons of the Moscow uprising.

The principal form of the December movement in Moscow was a peaceful *strike and demonstrations. The overwhelming majority of the worker masses* took an active part only in these forms of struggle. But it was the December action in Moscow that convincingly proved that, as an independent and predominant form of struggle the general strike is out of date, that the movement is breaking these narrow bounds with elemental and irresistible force and is giving rise to a higher form of struggle, uprising.

In declaring the strike, all the revolutionary parties, all the Moscow unions, sensed and even realized that it must inevitably grow into an uprising. On December 6 the Soviet of Workers' Deputies resolved to "strive to transform the strike into an armed uprising." As a matter of fact, however, *none of the organizations were prepared for this. Even the Joint Council* of Fighting Squads (*on December 9*!) spoke of an uprising as of something very remote, and it is quite evident that it had no hand in or control *of the street fighting that took place. The organizations failed to keep pace* with the growth and range of the movement.

The strike grew into an uprising, primarily as a result of the pressure of the objective *conditions that were created after October. The government* could no longer be taken by surprise by a general strike: it had already organized the counter-revolution, which was ready for military action. The general course of the *Russian revolution after October, and the sequence* of events in Moscow in the December days, have supplied striking proof of one of the most profound propositions of Marx: revolution progresses by giving rise to a strong and united counter-revolution, *i.e., it compels the* enemy to resort to more and more extreme measures of defence and in this way devises more powerful means of attack.

December 7 and 8: a peaceful strike, peaceful mass *demonstrations*.

Evening of the 8th: the siege of the Aquarium. The morning of the 9th: the crowd on Strastnaya Square is attacked by the dragoons. Evening: Fiedler's house is wrecked. Temper rises. The unorganized street crowds, quite sporadically and hesitatingly, set up the first barricades.

The 10th: artillery fire is opened on the barricades and the crowds in the streets. Barricades are set up more deliberately, and no longer in isolated cases, but on a really mass scale. The whole population is in the streets; all the main centres of the city are covered by a network of barricades. For several days the fighting squads wage a stubborn guerilla fight against the troops, which exhausts the troops and compels Dubasov* to beg for reinforcements. Only on December 15 does the superiority of the government forces become complete, and on December 17 the Semyonov regiment storms the Presnya District, the last stronghold of the uprising.

From strike and demonstrations to isolated barricades. From isolated barricades to the mass erection of barricades and street fighting against the troops. Over the heads of the organizations, the mass proletarian struggle developed from a strike to an uprising. This is the greatest historical gain of the Russian revolution achieved in December 1905; and like all preceding gains it was purchased at the price of enormous sacrifices. The movement was raised from a general political strike to a higher stage. It compelled the reaction to go *to extremes* in its resistance, and so brought vastly nearer the moment when the revolution will also go to extremes in the application of means of attack. The reaction *cannot go further* than bombard barricades, houses and street crowds. But the revolution can go ever so much further than the Moscow fighting squads; it can go very, very much further in breadth and depth. And the revolution has advanced far since December. The base of the revolutionary crisis has become immeasurably broader—the blade must now be sharpened to a keener edge.

The proletariat sensed the change in the objective conditions of the struggle and the need for a transition from the strike to an uprising sooner than its leaders. As is always the case, practice marched ahead of theory. A peaceful strike and demonstrations immediately ceased to satisfy the workers; they asked: what was to be done next? And they demanded more resolute action. The instructions to set up barricades reached the districts exceedingly late, when barricades were already being erected in the centre. The workers set to in large numbers, *but even this did not satisfy them*; they wanted to know: what was to be done next?—they demanded active measures. In December we, the leaders of the Social-Democratic proletariat, behaved like a commander-in-chief who had arranged the disposition of his troops in such an absurd way that most of them remained out of action. The masses of the workers demanded, but failed to receive, instructions for resolute mass action.

* Dubasov F. V. (1845-1912)—General Governor in Moscow, notorious for his ruthless suppression of the armed uprising of the Moscow workers in December 1905.—*Ed.*

Thus, nothing could be more short-sighted than Plekhanov's view, which is *seized upon by all the* opportunists, that the strike was inopportune and should not have been started, and that we "should not have taken to arms." On the contrary, we should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively; we should have explained to the masses that it was impossible to confine ourselves to a peaceful strike and that a *fearless and relentless armed fight* was indispensable. And now we must at last openly and publicly admit that political strikes are inadequate; we must carry on the widest agitation among the masses in favour of an armed uprising and make no attempt to obscure this question by talk about "preliminary stages," or to befog it in any way. We would be deceiving both ourselves *and the people if we concealed from them the fact that the impending* revolutionary action must take the form of a desperate, bloody war of extermination.

This is the first lesson of the December events. Another lesson refers to the character of the uprising, the methods by which it is conducted, *and the conditions under which the troops come over to the side of the* people. On this, an extremely biased view prevails in the Right wing of our Party. It is alleged that it is impossible to fight modern troops; the troops must become revolutionary. Of course, unless the revolution assumes a mass character and also affects the troops, serious fighting is out of the *question. It is necessary, of course, to carry on work among the troops.* But we must not imagine that the troops will come over to our side at one stroke, as it were, as a result of persuasion, or their own convictions. The Moscow insurrection clearly proved how stereotyped and lifeless this view is. As a matter of fact, the wavering of the troops, which is inevitable in every truly popular movement, leads to a real *fight for the troops* whenever the revolutionary struggle becomes more acute. The Moscow uprising presented an example of the desperate, frantic struggle for the troops that takes place between the reaction and the revolution. Dubasov *himself* declared that only five thousand out of the fifteen thousand men of the Moscow garrison were reliable. The government restrained the waverers by the most diverse and most desperate measures: they appealed to them, flattered them, bribed them, presented them with watches, money, etc.; they *doped them with vodka, they lied to them, threatened them, confined* them to barracks and disarmed them; and those soldiers who were suspected of being least reliable were removed by treachery and violence. We must have the courage to confess openly and unreservedly that in this respect we lagged behind the government. We failed to utilize the forces at our disposal to wage an active, bold, resourceful and aggressive fight for the wavering troops, like that successfully waged by the government. We have carried on work in the army, and we will redouble our efforts in the future to ideologically "win over" the army. *But we shall prove to be miserable* pedants if we forget that at the moment of the uprising a physical fight for the army must be waged.

In the December days the Moscow proletariat taught us magnificent lessons in ideologically "winning over" the troops, as, for example, on December 8 on Strastnaya Square, when the crowd surrounded the Cossacks, mingled and fraternized with them, and persuaded them to turn back. Or on December 10 in the Presnya District, when two working girls, carrying a red flag in a crowd of 10,000 people, rushed out to meet the Cossacks crying: "Kill us! We will not surrender the flag alive!" And the Cossacks were disconcerted and galloped away amidst the shouts of the crowd: "Hurrah for the Cossacks!" These examples of courage and heroism should be impressed forever on the memory of the proletariat.

But here are examples of how we lagged behind Dubasov. On December 9 soldiers were marching down Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street singing the *Marseillaise,* on their way to join the insurgents. The workers sent delegates to meet them. Malakhov* himself galloped at break-neck speed towards them. The workers were too late. Malakhov reached them first. He delivered a passionate speech, caused the soldiers to waver, surrounded them with dragoons, marched them off to barracks and locked them in. Malakhov reached the soldiers, we did not, although within two days, 150,000 men had risen at our call, and these could and should have organized the patrolling of the streets. Malakhov surrounded the soldiers with dragoons, whereas we failed to surround the Malakhovs with bomb-throwers. We could and should have done this; and long ago the Social-Democratic press (the old *Iskra*) pointed out that it was our duty during an uprising to exterminate ruthlessly all the civil and military chiefs. What took place on Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street was repeated, apparently, in front of the Nesvizhsky and Krutitsky Barracks, and when the workers attempted to "call out" the Ekaterinoslav Regiment, and when delegates were sent to the sappers in Alexandrov, and when the Rostov artillery on its way to Moscow was turned back, and when the sappers were disarmed in Kolomna, and so forth. When the uprising began we proved unequal to our task in the fight for the wavering troops.

December confirmed another of Marx's profound propositions, which the opportunists have forgotten, namely, that insurrection is an art, and that the principal rule of this art is that an audacious and determined *offensive* must be waged. We have not sufficiently assimilated this truth. We have not sufficiently mastered this art, nor taught it to the masses, this rule of attacking, come what may. We must make up for this with all our energy. It is not enough to take sides on the question of political slogans; we must take sides also on the question of armed insurrection. Those who are opposed to it, those who do not prepare for it, must be ruthlessly dismissed from the ranks of the supporters of the revolution, sent packing to its enemies, to the traitors or cowards; for the day is approaching when

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* Malakhov—assistant to the Moscow Military District Commander at the time of the 1905 December uprising in Moscow.—*Ed.*

the force of events and the conditions of the struggle will compel us to separate enemies from friends according to this principle. We must not preach passivity, nor advocate "waiting" until the troops "come over." No! We must proclaim from the housetops the need for a bold offensive and armed attack, the necessity at such times of exterminating the persons in command of the enemy, and of a most energetic fight for the wavering troops.

The third great lesson taught by Moscow concerns tactics and the organization of the forces for insurrection. Military tactics are determined by the level of military technique. This plain truth was dinned into the ears of the Marxists by Engels. Military technique today is not what it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers. Kautsky was right when he wrote that it is high time now, after Moscow, to revise Engels' conclusions, and that Moscow had inaugurated "*new barricade tactics.*" These tactics are the tactics of guerilla warfare. The organization required for such tactics is that of mobile and exceedingly small units, units of ten, three or even two persons. We often meet Social-Democrats now who snigger whenever units of five or units of three are mentioned. But sniggering is only a cheap way of ignoring the *new* question of tactics and organization called forth by street fighting under the conditions imposed by modern military technique. Study carefully the story of the Moscow uprising, gentlemen, and you will understand what connection exists between "units of five" and the question of "new barricade tactics."

Moscow advanced these tactics, but failed to develop them far enough, to apply them to any considerable extent, to a really mass extent. There were too few units, the slogan of bold attack was not issued to the masses of the workers and they did not apply it; the guerilla detachments were too uniform in character, their arms and methods were inadequate, their ability to lead the crowd was almost undeveloped. We must make up for all this and we shall do so by learning from the experience of Moscow, by spreading this experience among the masses and by stimulating their creative efforts to develop this experience still further. And the guerilla warfare and mass terror which have been going on in Russia everywhere and almost continuously since December will undoubtedly help the masses to learn the correct tactics to be applied during an uprising. Social-Democracy must recognize this mass terror and incorporate it into its tactics, organizing and controlling it, of course, subordinating it to the interests and conditions of the labour movement and the general revolutionary struggle, while eliminating and ruthlessly lopping off the "hooligan" perversion of this guerilla warfare which was so magnificently and ruthlessly suppressed by our Moscow comrades during the uprising and by the Letts during the notorious Lettish republics.*

* *Lettish republics* were called the Latvian rural districts whose population at the time of the 1905 revolution drove out the local authorities and landowners and established revolutionary organs of power.—*Ed.*

Military technique has made new progress quite recently. The Japanese war produced the hand grenade. The small arms factories have placed automatic rifles on the market. Both these weapons are already being successfully used in the Russian revolution, but to an inadequate extent. We can and must take advantage of improvements in technique, teach the workers' units to make bombs in large quantities, help them and our fighting squads to obtain supplies of explosives, fuses and automatic rifles. If the masses of the workers take part in uprisings in the towns, if mass attacks are made upon the enemy, if a determined and skilful fight is waged for the troops, who after the Duma, after Sveaborg and Kronstadt, are wavering more than ever—and the participation of rural districts in the general struggle is secured—victory will be ours in the next all-Russian armed uprising.

Let us then more extensively develop our work and more boldly set our tasks, while assimilating the lessons of the great days of the Russian revolution. The basis of our work is a correct estimate of class interests and of the requirements of the nation's development at the present time. Around the slogan demanding the overthrow of the tsarist regime and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly by a revolutionary government we are rallying and shall continue to rally an increasing section of the proletariat, the peasantry and the army. As hitherto, the basis and chief content of our work is to develop the consciousness of the masses. But let us not forget that, in addition to this general, constant and fundamental task, times like the present in Russia impose other, particular and special tasks. Let us not become pedants and philistines, let us not evade these special tasks of the moment, these special tasks of the given forms of struggle, by meaningless references to our permanent duties, which remain the same in all times and circumstances.

Let us remember that a great mass struggle is approaching. It will be an armed uprising. It must, as far as possible, be simultaneous. The masses must know that they are entering upon an armed, bloody and desperate struggle. Contempt for death must become widespread among the masses and ensure victory. The offensive against the enemy must be most energetic; attack and not defence must become the slogan of the masses; the ruthless extermination of the enemy will be their task; the organization of the struggle will become mobile and flexible; the wavering elements among the troops will be drawn into the active struggle. The party of the class-conscious proletariat must do its duty in this great struggle.

Proletary No. 2,
September 11 [August 29], 1906

THE BOYCOTT

The Left-wing Social-Democrats must reconsider the question of boycotting the State Duma. It should be borne in mind that we have always discussed this question concretely, and in connection with a definite political situation. For instance, *Proletary* (Geneva) wrote that "it would be ridiculous to foreswear making use even of the Bulygin Duma"*—if it could be born. And in referring to the Witte Duma** in the pamphlet *The State Duma and Social-Democracy*, 1906 (by N. Lenin and F. Dan), N. Lenin wrote: "We must discuss the question of tactics once again, in a business-like manner.... The situation today is not what it was at the time of the Bulygin Duma."

The principal difference between revolutionary Social-Democracy and opportunist Social-Democracy on the question of boycott is as follows: the opportunists in all circumstances confine themselves to applying the stereotyped method copied from a specific period in the history of German Socialism. We must utilize representative institutions; the Duma is a representative institution; therefore boycott is anarchism, and we must go into the Duma. All the arguments used by our Mensheviks, and especially by Plekhanov, on this topic, could be reduced to this childishly simple syllogism. The Menshevik resolution on the importance of representative institutions in a revolutionary epoch (see *Partiiniye Izvestia*, No. 2) strikingly reveals the stereotyped and anti-historical nature of their argument.

The revolutionary Social-Democrats, on the contrary, emphasize the necessity of carefully appraising the concrete political situation. It is impossible to cope with the tasks of the revolutionary epoch in Russia by copying in a biased manner the latest German pattern, forgetting the lessons of 1847-48. The progress of our revolution will be altogether incomprehensible if we confine ourselves to making bare contrasts between "anarchist" boycott and Social-Democratic participation in elections. Learn from the history of the Russian revolution, gentlemen!

This history has *proved* that the tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were the only correct tactics at that time, and were entirely justified by events. Whoever forgets this and argues about boycott without taking the

* *Cf.* Lenin, "The Boycott of the Bulygin Duma and Insurrection," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. III.—*Ed.*

** *Witte Duma*—the first State Duma, convened May 10, 1906 and dispersed by the tsarist government in July of the same year. Witte, S. J. (1849-1915), was then chairman of the Council of Ministers.—*Ed.*

lessons of the Bulygin Duma into account (as the Mensheviks always do) is certifying his own mental poverty, his inability to explain and take into account one of the most important and eventful periods of the Russian revolution. The tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma were based on a correct appraisal of the temper of the revolutionary proletariat and of the objective features of the situation, which made an immediate general outbreak inevitable.

Let us pass on to the *second* lesson of history—to the Witte, Cadet Duma. Nowadays we often hear Social-Democratic intellectuals making repentant speeches about the boycott of that Duma. The fact that it did assemble and undoubtedly rendered indirect service to the revolution is considered to be sufficient reason for repentantly confessing that the boycott of the Witte Duma had been a mistake.

Such a view, however, is extremely biased and short-sighted. It fails to take into consideration a number of very important facts of the period prior to the Witte Duma, the period of its existence and the period after its dissolution. Remember that the election law for that Duma was promulgated on December 11, at a time when the insurgents were waging an armed fight for a Constituent Assembly. Remember that *even the Menshevik "Nachalo"* (*Beginning*) wrote at the time: "The proletariat will also sweep away the Witte Duma *just as* it swept away the Bulygin Duma." Under such circumstances the proletariat could not and should not have surrendered to the tsar without a fight the power to convene the first representative assembly in Russia. The proletariat had to fight against the strengthening of the autocracy by means of loans obtained on the security of the Witte Duma. The proletariat had to combat the constitutional illusions on which, in the spring of 1906, the election campaign of the Cadets and the elections among the peasantry were *entirely* based. At that time, when the importance of the Duma was being immeasurably exaggerated, the only means of combating such illusions was the boycott. The degree to which the *spread* of constitutional illusions was connected with participation in the election campaign and in the elections in the spring of 1906 is strikingly revealed by the attitude adopted by our Mensheviks. Suffice it to recall that, in spite of the warnings of the Bolsheviks, in the resolution of the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party the Duma was referred to as a "*power*"! Another instance: with complete self-assurance, Plekhanov wrote: "The government will *fall* into the abyss if it dissolves the Duma." In reply to him it was said at that time: we must prepare to *push* the enemy into the abyss and not, like the Cadets, place hopes on its "falling" into the abyss by itself. And how soon the words then uttered were proved correct!

It was the duty of the proletariat to exert every effort to preserve the independence of its tactics in our revolution, namely: together with the class-conscious peasantry against the vacillating and treacherous Liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. But it was *impossible* to employ these tactics during

the elections to the Witte Duma owing to a number of *circumstances, both* objective and subjective, which, in the overwhelming majority of localities in Russia, would have made participation in the elections tantamount to the workers' party tacitly supporting the Cadets. The proletariat could not and should not have adopted half-hearted and artificially concocted tactics, prompted by "cunning" and *consternation, of elections for an unknown* purpose, of elections to the Duma, but not for the Duma. And yet it is a historical fact, which the silence, subterfuges and evasions of the Mensheviks cannot remove, that *not one* of them, not even Plekhanov, *dared* advocate in the press that we should go into the Duma. It is a fact that *not a single* call was issued *in the press to go into the Duma. It is a fact that the* Mensheviks themselves, in the leaflet issued by the Joint Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., *officially* recognized the boycott and confined the dispute *only* to the question of the stage at which the boycott was to be adopted. It is a fact that the Mensheviks laid emphasis, not on the elections *to the Duma, but on the elections as such,* and even on the process of *electing as a means* of organizing *for* insurrection and *for* sweeping away the Duma. Events proved, however, that it was impossible to carry on mass agitation during the elections, and that the Duma alone provided certain opportunities for carrying on agitation among the masses.

Whoever *really makes an effort to consider and weigh all these* complicated facts, both objective and subjective, will see that the Caucasus was but an exception which proved the general rule. He will see that contrite speeches and explaining away the boycott as a piece of "youthful impetuousness" reveal an extremely narrow, superficial and short-sighted *estimation of events.*

The dissolution of the Duma has now clearly demonstrated that in the conditions prevailing in the spring of 1906 the boycott, on the whole, was the right tactics and that it was useful. Under the conditions which *then* prevailed, *only* by means of the boycott could the Social-Democrats fulfil *their duty of giving the people* the necessary warning against the tsar's constitution and supplying the necessary criticism of the chicanery of the Cadets during the elections; and both (warning and criticism) *were strikingly* substantiated by the dissolution of the Duma.

Here is a small instance to illustrate the above. In the spring of 1906, Mr. Vodovozov, who is half-Cadet and half-Menshevik, was wholeheartedly in favour of participating in the elections and supporting the Cadets. Yesterday (August 11) he *wrote in Tovarishch** that the Cadets "wanted to be a parliamentary party in a country that has no parliament and a constitutional party in a country that has no constitution"; that "the whole character of the Cadet Party has been determined by the fundamental contradiction that exists between a radical program and quite non-radical tactics."

* *Tovarishch (Comrade)*—a newspaper published with the close collaboration of Prokopovich and Kuskova, former "Economists." It played the part of "Left" wing of the Cadets.—*Ed.*

The Bolsheviks could not desire a greater triumph than this admission on the part of a Left Cadet or Right-wing Plekhanovite.

However, while absolutely rejecting faint-hearted and short-sighted speeches of repentance, as well as the silly explanation of the boycott as "youthful impetuousness," we do not by any means reject the *new* lessons of the Cadet Duma. It would be mere pedantry to hesitate openly to admit these new lessons and take them into account. History has shown that when the Duma assembles opportunities arise for carrying on useful agitation both from within the Duma and, in connection with it, outside—that the tactics of joining forces with the revolutionary peasantry against the Cadets can be applied in the Duma. This may seem paradoxical, but such, undoubtedly is the irony of history: it was the Cadet Duma that clearly demonstrated to the masses the correctness of what we might briefly describe as "anti-Cadet" tactics. History has ruthlessly confuted all constitutional illusions and all "faith in the Duma"; but history has undoubtedly proved that that institution is of some, though modest, use to the revolution as a platform for agitation, for exposing the true "nature" of the political parties, etc.

Hence, the conclusion: It would be ridiculous to shut our eyes to realities. The time has now come when the revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists. We shall not refuse to go into the Second Duma when (or "if") it is convened. We shall not refuse to utilize this arena, but we shall not exaggerate its modest importance; on the contrary, guided by the experience already provided by history, we shall entirely subordinate the struggle we wage in the Duma to another form of struggle, namely, strikes, insurrection, etc. We will call the Fifth Congress of the Party; there we will resolve that *in the event of elections taking place*, it will be necessary to enter into an election agreement, for a few weeks, with the Trudoviks (unless the Fifth Party Congress is convened it will be impossible to conduct a united election campaign; and "blocs with other parties" are absolutely prohibited by the decision of the Fourth Congress). And then we shall utterly rout the Cadets.

This conclusion, however, does not by any means reveal the whole complexity of the task that confronts us. We deliberately emphasized the words: "*in the event of elections taking place,*" etc. We do not know yet whether the Second Duma will be convened, when the elections will take place, what the electoral laws will be like, or what the situation will be at that time. Hence, our conclusion suffers from being extremely general: we need it to enable us to sum up past experience, to take note of the lessons of the past, to put the forthcoming questions of tactics on a proper basis; but it is totally inadequate for solving the concrete problems of immediate tactics.

Only Cadets and "like-Cadets" of all sorts can be satisfied with such a conclusion at the present time, can create "slogans" for themselves out of yearnings for a new Duma and try to persuade the government of the desirability of convening it at the earliest date, etc. Only conscious or

unconscious traitors to the revolution would *at the present time* exert all efforts to divert the inevitable new tide of temper and excitement into the channel of an election and not into that of a fight waged by means of a general strike and uprising.

This brings us to the crux of the question of present-day Social-Democratic tactics. The issue now is not whether we should take part in the elections. To say "yes" or "no" in this case means saying nothing at all about the fundamental problem of the moment. Outwardly, the political situation in August 1906 is similar to that in August 1905, but enormous progress has been made during this period: the forces that are fighting on the respective sides, the forms of the struggle, as well as the time required for carrying out this or that strategical move—if we may so express it—have become more exactly defined.

The government's plan is clear. It is absolutely right in its calculations when it fixes the date of the convocation of the Duma and does not fix—*contrary to the law*—the date of the elections. The government does not want to tie its hands or show its cards. Firstly, it is gaining time in which to consider the amendment of the election law. Secondly—and this is the most important—it is keeping the date of the elections in reserve until the character and intensity of the new rise of temper can be fully gauged. The government wishes to fix the date of the elections at the particular time (and perhaps in the particular form, *i.e.*, the form of elections) when it *can split and paralyse the incipient uprising*. The government's reasoning is correct: if things remain quiet perhaps we shall not convene the Duma at all, or revert to the Bulygin laws. If, however, a strong movement arises, then perhaps we shall try to split it by fixing a provisional date for the elections and in this way entice certain cowards and simpletons away from the direct revolutionary struggle.

Liberal blockheads (see *Tovarishch* and *Rech*) so utterly fail to understand the situation that they are of their own accord crawling into the net set by the government. They are trying with might and main "to prove" the need for the Duma and the *desirability* of diverting the rising tide into the channel of an election. But even they cannot deny that the question of what form the impending struggle will assume is still an open one. Today's issue of *Rech* (August 12) admits:

> "What the peasants will say in the autumn . . . we cannot tell as yet. . . . It will be difficult to make any general forecasts until September-October, when the temper of the peasantry is definitely revealed."

The Liberal *bourgeoisie remain true* to their nature. They do not want to assist actively in choosing the form of the struggle and in moulding the temper of the peasants one way or another, nor are they capable of doing so. The interests of the bourgeoisie demand, not that the old regime be overthrown, but merely weakened, and that a Liberal Cabinet be formed.

The interests of the proletariat demand the complete overthrow of the old, tsarist regime and the convocation of a Constituent Assembly with full

power. Its interests demand the most active intervention in moulding the temper of the peasants, in choosing the most resolute forms of struggle, as well as the best moment for it. On no account must we withdraw, or obscure, the slogan: convocation of a Constituent Assembly by revolutionary means, *i.e.*, through the medium of a provisional revolutionary government. We must concentrate our efforts on explaining the conditions of insurrection: that it must be combined with the strike movement; that all the revolutionary forces must be rallied and prepared for it, etc. We must resolutely take the path that was indicated in the well-known manifestos, "To the Army and Navy" and "To All the Peasants," which were signed by the "bloc" of all revolutionary organizations, including the Trudovik group. Lastly, we must take special care that the government does not under any circumstances succeed in splitting, stopping, or weakening the incipient uprising by ordering elections. In this respect the lessons of the Cadet Duma must be absolutely binding for us, *viz.*, the lessons that the Duma campaign is a subordinate and secondary form of struggle, and that, owing to the objective conditions of the moment, the direct revolutionary movement *of the masses of the people still remains the principal form of struggle.*

Of course, the tactics of subordinating the Duma campaign to the main struggle, of assigning a secondary role to that campaign, keeping it in reserve for the contingency of an unfavourable outcome of the battle, or of the postponement of the battle until experience of the Second Duma is obtained—such tactics may, if you like, be described as the old boycott tactics. On formal grounds this description might be justified, because, apart from the work of agitation and propaganda, which is always obligatory, "preparation for elections" consists of minute technical preparations, which can very rarely be made a long time before the elections. We do not want to argue about words; in substance, these tactics are the logical *development* of the old tactics, but not a *repetition* of them; they are a deduction drawn from the last boycott, but not the last boycott itself.

To sum up. We must take into account the experience of the Cadet Duma and spread its lessons among the masses. We must prove to them that the Duma is "unfit," that the Constituent Assembly is essential, that the Cadets are wavering; we must demand that the Trudoviks throw off the yoke of the Cadets, and we must support the former against the latter. We must recognize at once the need for an election agreement between the Social-Democrats and the Trudoviks in the event of new elections taking place. We must exert all our efforts to counteract the government's plan to split the uprising by ordering elections. Advocating their tried revolutionary slogans with greater energy than ever, Social-Democrats must exert every effort to rally all the revolutionary elements and classes more closely, to convert the upsurge which is very probable in the near future into an armed uprising of the whole of the people against the tsarist government.

Proletary No. 1,
September 3 [August 21], 1906

THE LESSONS OF THE REVOLUTION

Five years have elapsed since the working class of Russia, in October 1905, *dealt the first mighty blow to the tsarist autocracy*. In those great days the proletariat aroused millions of toilers to struggle against their oppressors. In the space of a few months of that year the proletariat won improvements for which the workers had been waiting for decades in vain from "the powers that be." The proletariat won for the whole Russian people, if only for a short time, something that Russia had never known before—freedom of the press, assembly and association. It swept Bulygin's fake Duma from its path, extracted from the tsar a *manifesto* proclaiming a constitution and made it impossible once and for all for Russia to be ruled without representative bodies.

But the great victories of the proletariat *proved to be only* half-victories because the tsarist regime was not overthrown. The December uprising ended in defeat and the tsarist autocracy began to deprive the working class *of what it had won, deprive it of one gain after another as its offensive* weakened, as the struggle of the masses began to grow weaker. In 1906 workers' strikes, peasants' and soldiers' outbreaks were much weaker than *they had been in 1905 but were still very formidable, nonetheless. The tsar* dispersed the First Duma during which the militancy of the people had begun to mount again, but did not dare to change the electoral law all at once. In 1907 the struggle of the workers grew weaker still, and the tsar, dispersing the Second Duma, staged a *coup d'état* (June 3, 1907); he broke all the most solemn promises that he had made not to promulgate laws without the consent of the Duma and changed the electoral law in such a way that the landowners and the capitalists, the party of the Black-Hundred elements and their servitors were assured of a majority in the Duma.

But the victories and the defeats in the revolution taught the *Russian* people great historical lessons. While we are honouring the fifth anniversary of 1905, let us try to elucidate the sum and substance of these lessons.

The first and main lesson is that *only* the revolutionary struggle of the masses can bring about worthwhile improvements in the lives of the workers and in the administration of the state. No "sympathy" for the workers on the part of educated people, no struggle of lone terrorists, *however* heroic, could do anything to undermine the tsarist autocracy and the omnipotence of the capitalists. This could be achieved only by the struggle waged

by the workers themselves, only by the combined struggle of millions, and when *this* struggle grew weaker the workers immediately began to be deprived of what they had won. The Russian revolution was confirmation of the sentiments expressed in the song of international labour:

"No saviour from on high deliver,
No trust have we in prince or peer;
Our own right hand the chains must shiver,
Chains of hatred, greed and fear!"

The second lesson is that it is not enough to undermine and restrict the power of the tsar. It must be *destroyed.* Until the tsarist regime is destroyed concessions won from the tsar will never be durable. The tsar made concessions when the tide of the revolutionary offensive was rising. When it ebbed, he took them all back. Only a democratic republic, the overthrow of the tsarist regime, the passage of power into the hands of the people can deliver Russia from the violence and tyranny of officialdom, from the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma, from the despotic power which the landowners and their servitors wield over the countryside. If the miseries of the peasants and the workers have become even harder to bear now, after the revolution, this is the price they are paying for the fact that the revolution was weak, that the tsarist regime was not overthrown. The year 1905, then the first two Dumas, and their dissolution, taught the people a lot, taught them above all to fight in common for political demands. At first, upon awakening to political life, the people demanded concessions from the autocracy: that the tsar should convene a Duma, that he should appoint new ministers in place of the old, that the tsar should "grant" universal suffrage. But the autocracy did not and could not agree to such concessions. The autocracy answered the requests for concessions with bayonets. And then the people began to realize that they would have to *fight* against the autocratic regime. Now, we may say, this understanding is being driven even more drastically into the heads of the peasants by Stolypin and the black-reactionary noblemen's Duma. Yes, they are driving it in and they'll drive it right home too.

The tsarist autocracy has also learned a lesson from the revolution. It has seen that it cannot rely on the faith of the peasants in the tsar. It is now strengthening its power by forming an alliance with the Black-Hundred landowners and the Octobrist industrialists. To overthrow the tsarist autocracy, the revolutionary mass struggle will now require much greater momentum than in 1905.

Is it possible to gain this much greater momentum? The reply to this question brings us to the *third and cardinal* lesson of the revolution. This lesson consists in our having seen just *how* the various classes of the Russian people act. Prior to 1905 many thought that the whole people aspired to freedom in the same way and wanted the same freedom; at least the great majority had no clear understanding of the fact that the different

classes of the Russian people had different views on the struggle for freedom and were not striving for the same freedom. The revolution dispelled the mist. At the end of 1905, then later during the First and Second Dumas, *all* classes of Russian society came out openly. They showed themselves in action, revealing what their true ambitions were, what they could fight for and how strongly, persistently and vigorously they were able to fight.

The factory workers, the industrial proletariat waged *a most implacable* and strenuous struggle against the autocracy. The proletariat began the revolution with the Ninth of January and mass strikes. The proletariat carried this struggle to its uttermost limit, rising in armed insurrection in December 1905 in defence of the bullet-riddled, knouted and tormented peasantry. *The number of workers who went on strike in 1905 was about three million* (and with the railwaymen, post-office employees, etc., probably reached four million), in 1906—one million, in 1907—three-quarters of a million. The world had never yet seen a strike movement raised to such a pitch. The Russian proletariat showed what untold forces there are in the working-class masses when a real revolutionary crisis matures. The strike wave of 1905, the greatest ever known in history, did not exhaust all the militant forces of the proletariat by a long way. For instance, in the Moscow factory region there were 567,000 factory workers while the number of strikers was 540,000, whereas in the St. Petersburg factory region which has *300,000* factory workers there were a *million* strikers. This means that the workers in the Moscow district were still far from developing the same militance in the struggle as the St. Petersburg workers. In the Livonian province (city of Riga) there were 250,000 strikers to the 50,000 workers employed there. In other words each worker on the average struck more than five times in 1905. Now, in all parts of Russia, there cannot possibly be less than three million factory, mining and railway workers and this number is growing year by year. With a movement as strong as in Riga in 1905 they could turn out an army of *15 million strikers.*

No tsarist regime could withstand such an onset. But everybody understands that such an onset cannot be evoked artificially *in accordance* with the desires of the Socialists or progressive workers. Such an onset is possible only when the whole country is convulsed with crisis, mass indignation and revolution. In order to prepare such an onset we must draw the most backward sections of the workers into the struggle, we must devote years *and years to persistent, widespread, unflagging propaganda, agitation* and organizational work, building up and reinforcing proletarian unions and organizations in every form.

In militance the working class of Russia stood in the forefront of all the other classes of the Russian people. The very conditions of their lives *make* the workers capable of struggle and impel them to struggle. Capital concentrates the workers in great masses in big cities, cohering them together, teaching them to act in conjunction. At *every step the workers come* face

to face with their main enemy—the capitalist class. In combat with this enemy the worker becomes a *Socialist*, comes to realize the necessity of a complete reconstruction of the whole social structure, the complete abolition of all poverty and all oppression. Becoming Socialists the workers fight with self-abnegating courage against everything that stands in their path, first and foremost the tsarist regime and the feudal landlords.

The peasants too during the revolution entered the struggle against the landowners and against the government, but their struggle was much weaker. It is established that a majority of the factory workers (about three-fifths) took part in the revolutionary struggle, in strikes, while undoubtedly only a minority of the peasants took a part: in all probability not more than one-fifth or one-fourth. The peasants fought less persistently, more disconnectedly, less politically, at times still pinning their hopes on the benignity of the tsar little-father. In 1905-06 the peasants, properly speaking, only gave the tsar and the landlords a bit of a fright. But frightening them is no use. They must be *destroyed, their* government—the *tsarist* government—must be wiped off the face of the earth. Now Stolypin and the Black, landocratic Duma are trying to create new gentlemen farmers from the ranks of the rich peasants, to be the allies of the tsar and the Black-Hundred. But the more the tsar and the Duma help the rich peasants to ruin the mass of the peasantry, the more apperceptive does this mass become, the less faith will it preserve in the tsar, the faith of feudal slaves, the faith of benighted and ignorant people. Each year that passes swells the ranks of the agricultural labourers in the countryside, they have nowhere to seek salvation except in an alliance with the urban workers for joint action. Each year that passes fills the countryside with ruined peasants, utterly destitute, driven to desperation by hunger. When the urban proletariat rises again, millions upon millions of these peasants will throw themselves into the struggle against the tsar and the landowners with greater determination and solidarity.

The bourgeois liberals too took part in the revolution, *i.e.*, the liberal landowners, industrialists, lawyers, professors, etc. They constitute the party of "people's freedom" (the Constitutional-Democrats or Cadets). They were lavish in their promises to the people and made a lot of noise about freedom in their newspapers. They had a majority in the First and Second Dumas. They held out a promise of gaining freedom by "peaceful means," they deprecated the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. The peasants and many of the peasant deputies ("Trudoviks") believed these promises and followed humbly and obediently at the heels of the liberals, steering clear of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. This was the greatest mistake committed by the peasants (and a lot of townfolk) during the revolution. With one hand, and at that very rarely, the Liberals assisted the struggle for freedom while they kept offering the other hand to the tsar, promising to preserve and strengthen his power, to make peace between the peasants and the landlords, to "pacify" the "turbulent" workers.

When the revolution came to the point of a pitched battle with the tsar, the December uprising of 1905, the liberals in a body basely betrayed the freedom of the people and recoiled from the struggle. The tsarist autocracy took advantage of this betrayal of the people's freedom by the liberals, took advantage of the ignorance of the peasants who to a large extent believed the liberals and defeated the insurgent workers. And when the proletariat was defeated no Dumas, no blandishments and fair promises of the Cadets could hold back the tsar from abolishing all the vestiges of freedom and restoring the suzerainty and despotic power of the feudal landlords.

The liberals found themselves deceived. The peasants have received a severe, but useful lesson. There will be no freedom in Russia as long as the broad masses of the people believe in the liberals, believe in the possibility of "peace" with the tsarist regime and stand aloof from the revolutionary struggle of the workers. No power on earth can hold back the advent of freedom in Russia when the mass of the urban proletariat rises in struggle, brushes aside the wavering and treacherous liberals, enlists under its banner the rural labourers and impoverished peasantry.

And that the proletariat of Russia will rise in such a struggle, that it will take the lead in the revolution again is warranted by the whole economic situation of Russia, all the experience of the revolutionary years.

Five years ago the proletariat dealt the first blow to the tsarist autocracy. The first rays of freedom gleamed for the Russian people. Now the tsarist autocracy has been restored to its old self, the feudal lords are reigning and ruling again, the workers and peasants are everywhere being crushed down again, everywhere the Asiatic despotism of the authorities and infamous maltreatment of the people. But these hard lessons will not have been in vain. The Russian people are not what they were prior to 1905. The proletariat has taught them to fight. The proletariat will bring them to victory.

Rabochaya Gazeta No. 1,
November 12 [October 30], 1910

THE PERIOD OF THE STOLYPIN REACTION

THE BOLSHEVIKS CONSTITUTE THEMSELVES AN INDEPENDENT MARXIST PARTY

POLITICAL NOTES

The chauvinists are hard at work. Persistent rumours are being spread that the Japanese are arming, that they have concentrated 600 battalions in Manchuria for an attack on Russia. Turkey is alleged to be actively arming with the intention of declaring war on Russia this very spring. A revolt is said to be hatching in the Caucasus with the object of breaking away from Russia (all that is lacking is an outcry about the plans of the Poles!). Feeling against Finland is being worked up by tales that she is arming. A bitter campaign is being conducted against Austria over the building of a railway in Bosnia. The attacks of the Russian press on Germany, who is supposed to be inciting Turkey against Russia, are gaining in virulence. The campaign is being carried on not only in the Russian but also in the French press—whose bribery by the Russian government we were so opportunely reminded of recently by a Social-Democrat in the Duma.

The serious bourgeois press of the West refuses to regard this campaign as a figment of the imagination of journalists or the affair of sensation-mongers. No, evidently the cue has quite definitely been given by the "ruling circles"—in other words, by the Black-Hundred tsarist government, or a secret court gang like the notorious "Star Chamber," some systematic "line" is being pursued; some "new course" has been adopted. The foreign press traces a direct connection between this chauvinistic campaign and the fact that the doors of the Duma Committee of State Defence have been closed to all members of the Duma not belonging to that committee, *i.e.*, not only to the revolutionary parties but also to the Cadets; it is even said that the Russian government, as a crowning token of its contempt for "constitutionalism," intends to apply for credits for frontier fortifications not to the whole Duma, but only to the Black-Hundred-Octobrist committee.

Here are a few quotations from European newspapers, newspapers which are anything but Socialist and which cannot be suspected of optimism with regard to the Russian revolution:

"The German victories over France (in 1870), as Bismarck once remarked, fired the ambition of the Russian military, and they also reached out for martial laurels. For political, religious and historical reasons, Turkey seemed a most suitable object for this purpose (the war with Turkey of 1877-78). Evidently, the same views are held to-

day by certain Russian circles who have forgotten the lessons of the Japanese war and who do not understand the true needs of the country. As there are no more 'brothers' to liberate in the Balkans, they have to devise other means of influencing Russian public opinion. And these means, to tell the truth, are even more clumsy than those of that time: it is being made out that Russia is surrounded by internal and external foes."

"Russia's ruling circles want to try to bolster up their position by the old methods of forcibly suppressing the movement for emancipation and diverting public attention from the deplorable situation at home by arousing nationalist sentiments and stirring up diplomatic conflicts, which will end nobody knows how."

What is the significance of this new chauvinistic line and policy of the counter-revolutionary autocracy? After Tsushima and Mukden, only people from under whose feet the ground is definitely slipping can venture on such a policy. The experience of two years of reaction, notwithstanding all efforts, *has not created* any at all reliable support within the country for the Black-Hundred autocracy, nor any new class elements capable of rejuvenating the autocracy *economically*. And *without this* no counter-revolutionary brutalities or frenzy can save the present political system in Russia.

Stolypin, the Black-Hundred landlords, and the Octobrists all understand that without creating new class backings for themselves they cannot remain in power. Hence their policy of utterly ruining the peasants and forcibly breaking up the village communes in order to clear the way for capitalism in agriculture *at all costs*. The Russian liberals, the most learned, the most educated and the most "humane" of them—like the professors of the *Russkiye Vyedomosti*—prove to be incomparably more stupid in this respect than the Stolypins. "It would not be surprising," says the editorial in the February 1st issue of this newspaper, "if in deciding, for instance, the fate of the November provisional regulations, yesterday's Slavophile village-commune enthusiasts support the attempt of the Ministry to destroy the village communes by assigning land to individual householders as their private property. . . . It may even be assumed that the defensive aims common to the conservative majority in the Duma and to the Ministry will suggest to both measures even more aggressive than the celebrated ukases of 1906. . . . We get an amazing picture: the conservative government, with the support of representatives of the conservative parties, are preparing to carry out a radical reform of agrarian relations—which are the least amenable to drastic changes—and are deciding upon so radical a measure from abstract considerations as to the preferability of one form of ownership to another."

Wake up, mister professor! Shake off the mustiness of old-fashioned Narodism, and take a look at what has been done by two years of revolution. Stolypin vanquished you not only by physical force, but also by the fact

that he correctly understood the most practical need of economic development, namely, the forcible break-up of the old form of landownership. The great "advance" which has already been irrevocably accomplished by the revolution consists in the fact that formerly the Black-Hundred autocracy *could* rely upon the support of mediaeval forms of landownership, but that now it is *compelled*—positively and irrevocably compelled—to work for their destruction with feverish speed. For it has understood that *without the break-up* of the old agrarian order *there can be no escape* from the contradiction which most profoundly of all explains the Russian revolution—to wit: the most backward system of landownership and the most god-forsaken peasantry, on the one hand, and the most advanced industrial and finance capital, on the other!

"So you are for the Stolypin agrarian legislation?" the Narodniks will ask us in horror.—Oh, no. Calm yourselves! We are unreservedly opposed to *all* the old forms of landownership in Russia—both manorial and peasant allotment. We are unreservedly in favour of a forcible break-up of this rotten and decaying antiquity which poisons everything new. We are in favour of the bourgeois *nationalization* of the land, as the sole consistent slogan of the bourgeois revolution, and as the sole practical measure which will direct the entire edge of the historically-essential break-up against the landlords by helping to crystallize out from the peasant mass free owners on the land.

The distinguishing feature of the Russian bourgeois revolution is the fact that a revolutionary policy on the main question of the revolution—the agrarian question—is being pursued by the Black-Hundreds and by the peasants and workers. The liberal lawyers and professors, on the other hand, are advocating something that is absolutely lifeless, absurd and utopian—namely a reconciliation of two antithetical and mutually-exclusive methods of *breaking up* what has become obsolescent, and a reconciliation, moreover, which will mean that there will be no break-up at all. Either a victory for the peasant revolt and the complete break-up of the old landowning system in favour of a peasantry refashioned by the revolution—in other words, confiscation of the landed estates and a republic; or a Stolypin break-up, which also refashions—refashions and adapts, in fact, the old landowning system to capitalist relationships—but only entirely in the interests of the landlords and at the price of the utter ruin of the peasant masses, their forcible ejection from the countryside, eviction, starvation, and the extermination of the flower of the peasant youth with the help of jails, exile, shooting and torture. For a minority to carry out such a policy against the majority would not be easy, but economically it is not impossible. We must help the people to realize this clearly. But the attempt to escape from that utterly tangled skein of mediaeval contradictions which has been created by centuries of Russian history by means of a neat little reform, peacefully and without violence, is the stupidest dream of an inveterate "man in the

muffler." Economic necessity will certainly call for, and will *certainly bring* about a most "drastic change" in Russia's agrarian system. The historical question is whether it will be carried out by the landlords, led by the tsar and Stolypin, or by the peasant masses, led by the proletariat.

"Union of the opposition"—such is the topic of discussion in the entire Russian political press today. Stolypin's police-controlled *Rossiya* is jubilant. "Union?—that means that the Cadets too are revolutionaries! At the Cadets, at them!" The Cadet *Rech*, thoroughly imbued with the desire of the loyal official to prove that the Constitutional-Democrats can be no less *moderate than the Octobrists, mincingly purses its lips, pours* forth *a flood* of "moral" disgust over the unscrupulous attempts to accuse it of being revolutionary, and declares: We, of course, would welcome the union of the opposition, but that union must be a movement "*from the left to the right*" (editorial of February 2). "We have had experience of political mistakes and disillusionments. When an opposition unites, it naturally unites on the minimum program of the most moderate of the parties which form it."

This program is perfectly clear: the *hegemony of* bourgeois liberalism—those are my terms, say the Cadets, just as Falloux in 1871 said to Thiers, when the *latter appealed to him for support*: The monarchy—those are my terms.

*Stolichnaya Pochta** realized that it is shameful, disgraceful to say such things outright, and it therefore "does not agree" with *Rech* and confines itself to vague hints at the "pre-October view" (the accursed censorship prevents a clear statement of political program!) and, virtually speaking, calls for a deal. *Rech*, it as much as says, wants to lead and the revolutionaries want to lead (the new union), and what about me—don't I deserve a tip for acting as an honest broker?

"Union"—*we heartily sympathize with that slogan, especially when a* hint—although only a hint—is made at the "pre-October view." Only, history does not repeat itself, most amiable politicians! *And those lessons* which were given us by the "history of the three years" no power on earth can obliterate from the minds of the various classes. Those lessons are extremely rich, both for their positive content (the forms, character and conditions of the victory of the *mass* struggle of the workers and peasants in 1905) and for their negative content (the collapse of two Dumas, in other words, the collapse of constitutional illusions and Cadet hegemony).

Anybody who wants systematically to study, ponder over, understand and carry to the masses *these* lessons—please let him do so! We are all in *favour of "union"—union for a relentless struggle against the renegades* of the revolution. You don't like that? Well, then our paths diverge.

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* *Stolichnaya Pochta (Metropolitan Post)*—a daily newspaper published by the Trudovik group.—*Ed.*

The old "pre-October" slogan ("Constituent Assembly") is a good one and (let it not be said to the annoyance of M-d-m of the *Nasha Mysl* volume of articles) we shall not discard it. But it is inadequate. It is too formal. It contains no recognition of acute practical issues. We shall supplement it with the great lesson of the three great years. Our "minimum program," the "program of our union," is simple and clear: 1) confiscation of the landed estates; 2) a republic. The *kind of* Constituent Assembly we need is one that can achieve this.

The history of the two Dumas, the Cadet Dumas, demonstrated with amazing cogency, that the real struggle of social forces—the struggle which was not always realized, which did not always break into the open, but which always exercised a decisive influence upon every big political issue and which always swept into oblivion the conjuring tricks of the naive and roguishly-astute ignoramuses of "constitutionalism"—that struggle was waged completely and entirely on behalf of the two above-mentioned "objects." Not abstract theories, but the real experience of the struggle of our popular masses, under the real conditions of Russia's landowners' autocracy, has demonstrated to us in practice the inevitability of precisely these slogans. To those who are capable of grasping them we propose to "go their separate ways" but "strike jointly," to fight the enemy who is devastating Russia and killing off thousands of Russia's finest people.

"You will remain alone with such a program of union." That is not true. Read the speeches of the non-partisan peasants in the first two Dumas, and you will see that our program of unity only formulates their wishes, their needs and the essential elementary inferences from these needs. On those who do not understand these needs —from the Cadets to Peshekhonov (he too has preached "unity" in Moscow, as we are informed from there)—we shall wage war in the name of "unity."

It will be a stubborn war. We knew how to work during the long years preceding the revolution. Not for nothing do they say we are as firm as a rock. The Social-Democrats have formed a proletarian party which will not lose heart at the failure of the first armed onslaught, will not lose its head, and will not be carried away by adventures. That party is marching towards Socialism, without tying up its fate with the issue of any period of bourgeois revolutions. Precisely for that reason, too, it is free from the weak sides of bourgeois revolutions. And that proletarian party is marching to victory.

Proletary No. 21,
February 26 [13], 1908

CERTAIN FEATURES OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARXISM

Our doctrine—said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical statement stresses with *remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is constantly being lost sight of.* And by losing sight of it, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, disfigured and lifeless; we deprive it of its living soul; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine that historical development is all-embracing and full of contradictions; we sever its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history.

And, indeed, in our time people are very frequently to be met with among those interested in the fate of Marxism in Russia who lose sight *precisely of this aspect of Marxism. Yet, it must be clear to everybody that* in recent years Russia has undergone changes so abrupt as to alter the situation with unusual rapidity and unusual force—the social and political situation, which in a most direct and immediate manner determines the conditions of action, and, hence, the aims of action. I am not referring, of course, to general and fundamental aims, which do not change with turns of history so long as the fundamental relations between classes do not change. It is perfectly obvious that this general trend of economic (and not only economic) evolution in Russia, like the fundamental relations between the various classes of Russian society, has not changed during, say, the last six years.

But the aims of direct and immediate action have changed very markedly during this period, just as the concrete social and political situation has changed—and, *consequently,* in Marxism too, since it is a living doctrine, *various* sides *were bound* to come to the fore.

In order to make this thought clear, let us take a glance at the change that has taken place in the concrete social and political situation during the past six years. We at once discern two three-year periods into which this six-year period falls, the one ending roughly with the summer of 1907, and the other with the summer of 1910. The first three-year period, regarded from the purely theoretical standpoint, is distinguished by rapid changes in the fundamental features of the state system in Russia. The course

of these changes was very uneven and the amplitude of oscillations in both directions was very great. The social and economic basis of these changes in the "superstructure" was the action of *all* classes of Russian society in *the most varying* fields (activity inside and outside the Duma, the press, unions, meetings, and so forth), so open and impressive and on such a mass scale as is not often to be observed in history.

The second three-year period, on the contrary, was distinguished—we repeat that we are here confining ourselves to the purely theoretical "sociological" standpoint—by an evolution so slow that it almost amounted to stagnation. There were no changes at all noticeable in the state system. There were no, or almost no open and variegated actions by the *classes* in the majority of the "arenas" in which these actions were enacted in the preceding period.

The similarity between the two periods consisted in the fact that the evolution of Russia in both periods remained the same as before, capitalist evolution. The contradiction between this economic evolution and the existence of a number of feudal, mediaeval institutions was not removed and also remained as before in consequence of the fact that the assumption of a partially bourgeois character by certain institutions could only aggravate rather than ameliorate this contradiction.

The difference between the two periods consisted in the fact that during the first of these periods the foreground of the historical arena was occupied by the question of what exact form the result of the rapid and uneven changes aforementioned would take. The content of these changes was bound to be bourgeois owing to the capitalist character of the evolution of Russia. But there is a bourgeoisie and a bourgeoisie. The middle and big bourgeoisie, which professed a more or less moderate liberalism, was, owing to its very class position, afraid of abrupt changes and strove for the retention of large remnants of the old institutions both in the agrarian system and in the political "superstructure." The rural petty bourgeoisie, which is interwoven with the peasantry that lives by "the labour of its own hands," was bound to strive for bourgeois reforms *of a different kind,* reforms that would leave far less room for mediaeval survivals. The wage-labourers, to the extent that they consciously realized what was going on around them, were bound to work out for themselves a definite attitude towards this clash of two distinct tendencies, both of which remained within the framework of the bourgeois system, but which determined entirely different forms for it, entirely different rates of its development, different degrees of its progressive influences.

It this way, the period of the past three years, not fortuitously but necessarily, brought to the forefront in Marxism those problems which are usually referred to as problems of tactics. Nothing is more erroneous than the opinion that the disputes and differences that arose over these questions were "intellectual" disputes, that they were "a struggle for influence over

the immature proletariat," that they were an expression of the "adaptation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat," as all the *Vekha*-ites* of various kinds think. On the contrary, it was precisely because this class had reached maturity that it could not remain indifferent to the clash of the two different tendencies in the entire bourgeois development of Russia, and the ideologists of this class could not avoid providing theoretical formulations corresponding (directly or indirectly, in direct or reverse reflection) to these different tendencies.

In the second three-year period the clash between different tendencies of bourgeois development in Russia was *not* on the order of the day, because *both* these tendencies were being crushed by the "diehards,"** forced back, driven inwards and, for the time being, smothered. The mediaeval diehards not only occupied the foreground but also inspired broad sections of bourgeois society with *Vekha*-ite sentiments, with a spirit of despondency and recantation. It was not the collision between two methods of reforming the old order that appeared on the surface, but a loss of faith in reforms of all kinds, a spirit of "meekness" and "repentance," an infatuation for anti-social doctrines, a fad of mysticism, and so on.

And this astonishingly abrupt change was not fortuitous, nor was it the result of "external" pressure alone. The preceding period had so profoundly stirred up strata of the population who for generations and centuries had stood aloof from, and were strangers, to political questions, that "a revaluation of all values," a new study of fundamental problems, a new interest in theory, in elementals, in a study beginning with the rudiments, arose naturally and inevitably. The millions, suddenly awakened from their long sleep, and suddenly confronted with extremely important problems, could not remain on this level long, could not carry on without a respite, without a return to elementary questions, without a new training which would help them to "digest" lessons of unparalleled richness and make it possible for incomparably wider masses again to march forward, but now far more firmly, more consciously, more assuredly and more persistently.

The dialectics of historical development was such that in the first period it was the accomplishment of immediate reforms in every sphere of the country's life that was on the order of the day, while in the second period on the order of the day was the study of experience, its assimilation by wider strata, its penetration, if one may so express it, to the subsoil, to the backward ranks of the various classes.

It is precisely because Marxism is not a lifeless dogma, not a final,

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* *Vekha*-ites—(*Vekha*—landmark)—*Vekhi*, a collection of articles published in 1909 by a group of leading Constitutional-Democratic writers, expressing gratitude to the tsar in the name of the bourgeoisie for suppressing the revolution. The publication of this symposium marked the final desertion of the Russian liberals to the camp of reaction.—*Ed.*

** In Russian *Zubri* (bisons), an ironical appellation used in political literature to designate reactionary landlords of the extreme Right.—*Ed.*

finished and ready-made doctrine, but a living guide to action that it was bound to reflect the astonishingly abrupt change in the conditions of social life. A reflection of the change was a profound disintegration and disunity, vacillations of all kinds, in a word, a very serious *internal* crisis of Marxism. The necessity of putting up a determined resistance to this disintegration, of waging a determined and persistent struggle on behalf of the *foundations* of Marxism was again on the order of the day. In the preceding period, extremely wide sections of the classes that cannot avoid Marxism in formulating their aims had assimilated Marxism in an extremely one-sided and mutilated fashion, having learnt by rote certain "slogans," certain answers to tactical questions, *without having understood* the Marxist criteria of these answers. The "revaluation of values" in all the various spheres of social life led to a "revision" of the most abstract and general philosophical foundations of Marxism. The influence of bourgeois philosophy in its multifarious idealist shades found expression in the Machian infatuation among the Marxists. The repetition of "slogans" learnt by rote but not understood and not thought out led to the widespread prevalence of empty phrasemongering, which in practice amounted to absolutely un-Marxist, petty-bourgeois currents, such as frank or shamefaced "Otzovism,"* or the recognition of Otzovism as a "legitimate shade" of Marxism.

On the other hand, the spirit of *Vekha*-ism, the spirit of recantation which had taken possession of very wide sections of the bourgeoisie, penetrated to the current which endeavours to confine Marxist theory and practice to "moderate and decent" channels. All that remained Marxist here was the phraseology that served to clothe the arguments about "hierarchy," "hegemony" and so forth, which were thoroughly infected by the spirit of liberalism.

It cannot, of course, be the purpose of this article to examine these arguments. A mere reference to them is sufficient to illustrate what has been said above regarding the profundity of the crisis through which Marxism is passing, regarding its connection with the whole social and economic situation in the present period. The questions raised by this crisis cannot be brushed aside. Nothing can be more pernicious or unprincipled than the attempts to dismiss them by phrasemongering. Nothing is more important than to rally *all* Marxists who have realized the profundity of the crisis and the necessity of combating it, for the purpose of defending the theoretical foundations of Marxism and its basic propositions, which are being distorted from diametrically opposite sides by the spread of the bourgeois influence to the various "fellow-travellers" of Marxism.

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* *Otzovism* (literally Recall-ism, from *otozvat*—to recall)—a "Leftist" opportunistic trend in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party during the period of reaction that followed the defeat of the revolution of 1905-07. The Otzovists advocated the recall of the Social-Democratic deputies from the State Duma and insisted that the Party stays clear from all work in the trade unions and other legal organizations of the working class.—*Ed.*

The preceding three years had awakened wide sections to a conscious participation in social life, sections that in many cases are for the first time beginning to acquaint themselves with Marxism in a real way. In this connection the bourgeois press is creating far more fallacious ideas than ever before, and is disseminating them more widely. Under these circumstances the disintegration in the ranks of the Marxists is particularly dangerous. Therefore, to understand the reasons for the inevitability of this disintegration at the present time and to close their ranks for the purpose of waging a consistent struggle against this disintegration is, in the most direct and precise meaning of the term, the task of the era for Marxists.

Originally published in *Zvezda* No. 2,
January 5, 1911 [December 23, 1910]

STOLYPIN AND THE REVOLUTION

The assassination of that hangman-in-chief, Stolypin, occurred at a time when a number of symptoms have appeared showing that the first period in the history of the Russian counter-revolution is drawing to a close. That is why the event of September 1, quite insignificant in itself, again poses the extremely important question of the content and meaning of the counter-revolution in Russia. Amid the chorus of reactionaries who are servilely singing the praises of Stolypin, or are rummaging in the history of the intrigues of the Black-Hundred gang which is lording it over Russia, and amid the chorus of the liberals who are shaking their heads over the "wild and insane" shot (it goes without saying that included among the liberals are the former Social-Democrats of the *Dyelo Zhizni* [*The Cause of Life*] who employed the hackneyed expression in the quotation marks), one discerns notes of a really serious and principled attitude. Attempts are being made to view "the Stolypin period" of Russian history as a definite entity.

Stolypin headed the government of counter-revolution for about five years, from 1906 to 1911. This was indeed a singular period crowded with instructive events. Outwardly, it may be described as the period of preparation for and accomplishment of the *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907. The preparation for this coup, which to date has already displayed all its consequences in all the spheres of our social life, began in the summer of 1906, when Stolypin addressed the First Duma in his capacity as Minister of the Interior. The question is: What social forces supported the men who perpetrated the coup, or what forces prompted them? What was the social and economic content of the period ushered in on June 3? Stolypin's personal "career" provides instructive material and interesting illustrations bearing on this question.

A landlord and a marshal of the nobility, he was appointed governor in 1902, under Plehve, gained "fame" in the eyes of the tsar and the reactionary court clique by his brutal reprisals against the peasants and the cruel punishment he meted out to them (in the Saratov province), organized Black-Hundred gangs and pogroms in 1905 (the pogrom in Balashov), became Minister of the Interior in 1906 and President of the Council of Ministers after the dispersal of the First State Duma. That, in very brief outline, is Stolypin's political biography. And this biography of the head of the counter-revolutionary government is at the same time the biography

of the class which carried out the counter-revolution—Stolypin being nothing more than an agent or clerk in its employ. This class is the Russian landed nobility with Nicholas Romanov, the first nobleman and biggest landlord, at their head. This class is made up of the thirty thousand feudal landowners who control seventy million dessiatins of land in the European part of Russia—that is to say, as much land as is owned by ten million peasant households. The latifundia owned by this class form the basis of the feudal exploitation which, in various forms and under various names (labour rent, bondage, etc.) still reigns in the traditionally Russian central provinces. The "land hunger" of the Russian peasant (to use a favourite expression of the liberals and Narodniks) is nothing but the reverse side of the *over-abundance of land* in the hands of this class. The agrarian question, which was the central issue in our Revolution of 1905, was the question of whether landlordism would remain intact—in which case the poverty-stricken, indigent, starving, brow-beaten and downtrodden peasantry would *inevitably* remain the bulk of the population for many years to come; or whether the bulk of the population would succeed in winning for themselves more or less human conditions, conditions in any way resembling those in the free countries of Europe—which, however, *could not be accomplished* unless landlordism and the landlord monarchy inseparably bound up with it were abolished in a revolutionary way.

Stolypin's political biography is the faithful reflection and expression of the conditions under which the tsarist monarchy finds itself. In view of the situation that the revolution had created for the monarchy, Stolypin could not act otherwise than in the way he did. The monarchy *could not* act in any other way when it had become clear beyond any doubt, when it had become clear in actual practice both *prior* to the Duma, in 1905, and *during* the Duma, in 1906, that the vast, the overwhelming majority of the population had already realized that its interests could not be reconciled with the preservation of the landlord class and was striving to abolish that class. Nothing could be more superficial and more false than the assertions of the Cadet writers that the attacks upon the monarchy in our country were merely the expression of "intellectual" revolutionism. On the contrary, the objective conditions were such that it was the struggle of the peasants against landlordism that inevitably posed the question of whether our landlord monarchy could continue to live or whether it must die. Tsarism *was compelled* to wage a life and death struggle, it *was compelled* to seek other means of defence besides the utterly impotent bureaucracy and the army which had become enfeebled as a result of military defeat and internal disintegration. All that the tsarist monarchy could do under the circumstances was to organize the Black-Hundred elements of the population and to perpetrate pogroms. The high moral indignation with which our liberals speak of the pogroms cannot but produce upon every revolutionary an impression of something utterly wretched and cowardly, particularly in view of the fact that this high moral condemnation of pogroms turns out to be fully

compatible with the idea of conducting negotiations and concluding agreements with the pogrom-makers. The monarchy had to defend itself against the revolution; and the semi-Asiatic, feudal *Russian* monarchy of the Romanovs could not defend itself by any other but the most infamous, most disgusting, vile and cruel means. The only honourable way of combating the pogroms, the only rational way from the standpoint of a Socialist and a democrat, is not to express high moral condemnation, but to assist the revolution selflessly and in every way, organize the revolution for the *overthrowal* of this monarchy.

The pogrom-maker Stolypin groomed himself for a ministerial post in the only way in which a tsarist governor could groom himself for such a post—by torturing the peasants, by organizing pogroms and by showing an ability to conceal these Asiatic "practices" behind gloss and phrases, behind a pose and gestures made to look "European."

And the leaders of our liberal bourgeoisie, who are expressing their high moral condemnation of pogroms, carried on negotiations with the pogrom-makers, recognizing not only the latters' right to existence, but their hegemony in the work of setting up a new Russia and of ruling it! The assassination of Stolypin has been the occasion for a number of interesting revelations and confessions concerning this question. Thus, for instance, Witte and Guchkov have published letters concerning the former's negotiations with "public figures" (read: with the leaders of the moderate liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie) about forming a Cabinet after October 17, 1905. Among those who took part in the negotiations with Witte—these negotiations must have taken a long time, because Guchkov writes of "the wearisome days of protracted negotiations"—were Shipov, Trubetskoy, Urusov and M. Stakhovich, *i.e.*, the future leaders of the Cadets, *and* of the Party of "Peaceable Renovation," *and* of the Octobrist Party. The negotiations, it turns out, were broken off on account of Durnovo, whom the "liberals" refused to accept as Minister of the Interior, while Witte demanded this in the form of an ultimatum. Urusov, however, a leading light of the Cadet Party in the First Duma, "ardently supported Durnovo's candidacy." When Prince Obolensky suggested Stolypin for the post "some of those present supported the idea, others said that they did not know him." "I remember definitely," writes Guchkov, "that *no one* raised the objection of which Count Witte writes in his letter."

Now the Cadet press, in its desire to emphasize its "democratism" (no joke!), particularly, perhaps, in connection with the elections in the first curia in St. Petersburg, where a Cadet opposed an Octobrist, is trying to castigate Guchkov for those negotiations. "How often it happened," writes the *Rech* in its issue of September 28, "that in order to please the powers that be, the Octobrist gentlemen, with Guchkov at their head, joined hands with Mr. Durnovo's colleagues! How often it happened that, with their eyes glued to the powers that be, they turned their backs on public opinion!" The same reproach levelled by the Cadets at the Octobrists is repeated in

That's a valuable admission, indeed! What a pile of lances were broken at that time in tilts with the Cadets over the question as to whether the "speeches in the Duma" could be regarded as the "centre of gravity" during that period! What a torrent of angry abuse and supercilious doctrinaire lecturing was let loose in the Cadet press against the Social-Democrats who, in the spring and summer of 1906, maintained that the centre of gravity during that period was *not* the speeches in the Duma! How much the *Rech* and the *Duma* reproached the whole of Russian "society" at that time for cherishing dreams about a "Convention" and failing to wax sufficiently enthusiastic over the Cadet triumphs in the "parliamentary" arena of the First Duma! Five years have passed since then; there happens to be a need for a general appraisal of the period of the First Duma, and the Cadets proclaim quite nonchalantly, as if it were a matter of changing a pair of gloves, that "Of course, the centre of gravity during that period was not the speeches in the Duma."

Of course, not, gentlemen! But what, then, was the centre of gravity?

"Behind the scenes," we read in the *Rech*, "a sharp struggle was going on between the representatives of two currents. One recommended a policy of compromise with the popular representatives, not shrinking even before the formation of a 'Cadet Cabinet.' The other demanded that the government act vigorously, dissolve the State Duma and change the election law. That was the program advocated by the Council of the United Nobility which enjoyed the support of powerful influences.... At first Stolypin hesitated. There are indications that on two occasions, with Kryzhanovsky acting as intermediary, he made overtures to Muromtsev, proposing to discuss the possibility of forming a Cadet Cabinet with Stolypin as Minister of the Interior. But at the same time Stolypin undoubtedly maintained contact with the Council of the United Nobility."

That is how history is written by the educated, scholarly and well-read leaders of the liberals! So it appears that the "centre of gravity" was *not* speeches, *but* the struggle between two currents within the Black-Hundred tsarist court clique! Immediate "onslaught," without any delays, was the policy of the Council of the United Nobility, *i.e.*, not of individual persons, not of Nicholas Romanov, not of "one current" in *"high quarters,"* but of *a definite class*. The Cadets see, clearly and soberly, their rivals *on the Right*. But anything *to the Left* of the Cadets has disappeared from their field of vision. History was being made by the "high quarters," the Council of the United Nobility and the Cadets; the common people, *of course, took no part in the making of history*! A *definite* class (the nobility) was opposed by the "People's Freedom" Party, which stands *above* classes, while the "high quarters," (*i.e.*. the tsar little-father) hesitated.

It is hardly possible to imagine a higher degree of selfish class blindness, a worse form of distorting history and forgetting the elementary truths of historical science, a more wretched muddle and a worse confusion of class, party and individuals!

Nobody is as blind as he who *does not want* to see the democracy and its forces.

Of course, the centre of gravity during the period of the First Duma was not the speeches in the Duma. It lay in the struggle between classes outside the Duma, in the struggle waged by the feudal landlords and *their* monarchy against the messes of the people, against the workers and peasants. It was precisely during that period that the revolutionary movement of the masses was again on the upgrade; the spring and summer of 1906 were marked by a grim upsurge of the wave of strikes in general and of political strikes, of peasant riots and of mutinies in the armed forces. *That*, Messrs. Cadet historians, was *why* the "high quarters" hesitated: the struggle between the currents within the tsar's gang was over the question whether, considering the force of the revolution at the time, they should attempt the *coup d'état at once*, or whether they should *bide their time* and lead the bourgeoisie by the nose a little longer.

The First Duma fully convinced the landlords (Romanov, Stolypin and Co.) that there can be no peace between them and the peasant and working-class masses. This conviction of theirs fully accorded with objective reality. All that remained for them to decide was a question of minor importance: when and how to change the election law—at once or gradually? The bourgeoisie vacillated; but its entire behaviour, even that of the Cadet bourgeoisie, showed that it feared the revolution a hundred times more than it feared reaction. That was why the landlords deigned to invite the leaders of the bourgeoisie (Muromtsev, Heyden, Guchkov and Co.) to conferences at which they discussed the question of whether they might not *jointly* form a Cabinet. And the *entire* bourgeoisie, including the Cadets, conferred with the tsar, with the pogrom-makers, with the leaders of the Black-Hundreds about the means of combating the revolution; but since the end of 1905 the bourgeoisie has never sent representatives of a single one of its parties to confer with the leaders of the revolution about *how* to overthrow the autocracy and the monarchy.

That is the principal lesson to be drawn from the "Stolypin period" of Russian history. Tsarism conferred with the bourgeoisie when the revolution still seemed to be a force; but it applied its jackboot to kick out gradually *all* the leaders of the bourgeoisie—first Muromtsev and Milyukov, then Heyden and Lvov, and, finally, Guchkov—as soon as the revolutionary pressure from below relaxed. The difference between the Milyukovs, the Lvovs and the Guchkovs is absolutely immaterial—nothing but a matter of the sequence in which these leaders of the bourgeoisie turned their cheeks to receive the ... "kisses" of Romanov-Purishkevich-Stolypin and the sequence in which they received these ... "kisses."

Stolypin disappeared from the stage at the very moment when the Black-Hundred monarchy had taken all it could use of the counter-revolutionary sentiments of the whole Russian bourgeoisie. Now this bourgeoisie—repudiated, humiliated, and disgraced by its own renunciation of democracy,

of the struggle of the masses, of the revolution—stands perplexed and bewildered, seeing the symptoms of a gathering new revolution. Stolypin helped the Russian people to learn a useful lesson: Either march to freedom, by overthrowing the tsar's monarchy, under the leadership of the proletariat; or sink deeper into slavery. submit to the Purishkeviches, Markovs and Tolmachovs, under the ideological and political leadership of the Milyukovs and Guchkovs.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 24,
October 31 [18], 1911

ON LIQUIDATORISM AND THE GROUP OF LIQUIDATORS*

Whereas

1) For nearly four years already the R.S.D.L.P. has been waging a determined fight against the Liquidatorist trend, which was characterized at the conference of the Party in December, 1908 as

"attempts on the part of a section of the Party intellectuals to liquidate the existing organization of the R.S.D.L.P. and to replace it at all costs, even at the price of downright renunciation of the program, tactics and traditions of the Party, by an amorphous association functioning legally";

2) The Plenum of the Central Committee held in January 1910, continuing the fight against this trend, unanimously declared it to be a manifestation of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat and demanded as a condition for real Party unity and for the fusion of the former Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, a complete rupture with Liquidatorism and the utter rout of this bourgeois deviation from Socialism;

3) In spite of all the decisions of the Party, and in spite of the obligation assumed by the representatives of all the factions at the Plenum of January 1910, a section of Social-Democrats, grouped around the journals *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni,* has openly come out in defence of a trend which the entire Party has recognized to be a product of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat;

4) The former members of the Central Committee, M—1, Yuri and Roman, not only refused to join the Central Committee in the spring of 1910, but refused even to attend a single meeting for the purpose of co-opting new members, and openly declared that they considered the very existence of the Central Committee of the Party "harmful";

5) It was precisely after the Plenum of 1910 that the above-mentioned principal publications of the Liquidators, the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni,* definitely turned to Liquidatorism along the whole line, not only "derogating" [contrary to the decisions of the Plenum] from the "importance of the illegal Party," but renouncing it outright, declaring that the

* This resolution was adopted at the Sixth (Prague) Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. at which the Mensheviks were expelled from the Party and the Bolsheviks constituted themselves an independent, Bolshevik Party.—*Ed.*

Party was "a corpse," declaring that the Party was already liquidated, *declaring that the idea of reviving the illegal Party* was "a reactionary utopia," using the columns of legally published journals to heap slander and abuse on the illegal Party, calling upon the workers to regard the nuclei of the Party and its hierarchy as "dead," etc.;

6) At a time when throughout Russia the members of the Party, irrespective of factions, united to promote the immediate task of convening a Party conference, the Liquidators, banded together in entirely independent coteries, *split away from the local organizations, even where the pro-*Party Mensheviks* predominated (Ekaterinoslav, Kiev) and definitely refused to maintain any Party relations with the local organizations of the R.S.D.L.P., therefore be it

Resolved that

The conference declares that the group of the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, by dint of its conduct, has *definitely placed itself outside the Party.*

The conference calls upon all Party members, irrespective of tendencies and views, to combat the Liquidatorist trend, explain its utter harmfulness for the cause of the emancipation of the working class, and bend all their efforts to revive and strengthen the illegal R.S.D.L.P.

First published in 1912
in the pamphlet
The All-Russian 1912 Conference

* *Pro-Party Mensheviks*—a group of Mensheviks headed by Plekhanov who, while adhering basically to their Menshevik positions, supported the Bolsheviks on the question of preserving and strengthening the illegal proletarian party, and drew a demarcation line between themselves and the Liquidators.—*Ed.*

self to the statements made by the disputants, but must examine the *facts* and *documents* for himself, see whether there is any evidence of *witnesses* and whether that evidence is reliable.

This, *of course, is not always easy to do. It is much* "easier" *to take* for granted what you *happen* to hear, what is more "openly" proclaimed, and so on. But people who are satisfied with this are dubbed "shallow," shallow-brained people, and no one takes them seriously. It is impossible to get at the truth of any important question unless one undertakes a cer*tain amount of independent* work, *and* whoever is afraid of work deprives himself of the possibility of finding the truth.

Therefore, we appeal only to those workers who are not afraid of this work, who have decided to get at the bottom of the matter *themselves* and try to *discover facts, documents, evidence of witnesses.*

The first question that arises is—what is Liquidatorism? Where did this word come from, what does it mean?

The *Luch* says that the liquidation of the Party, *i.e.*, the dissolution, the break-up of the Party, the renunciation of the Party, is merely a wicked invention; the "factionalist" Bolsheviks invented this charge against the Mensheviks!

The *Pravda* states that the whole Party has been condemning and fighting Liquidatorism for over four years.

Who is right? How is one to discover the truth?

Obviously, there is only one way of doing it: to seek for facts and documents in the *history* of the Party of the last four years, *from 1908 to* 1912, when the Liquidators *finally seceded* from the Party.

It is precisely these four years, when the present Liquidators *were still* in the Party, that represent the most important period for the purpose of *tracing* the origin of the concept, Liquidatorism.

Hence, the first and basic conclusion: whoever talks of Liquidatorism, while *avoiding* the facts and documents of the *Party* during the period 1908-11, is hiding the truth from the workers.

What are these facts and documents of the Party?

First of all the *Party decision* adopted in December 1908*. If the workers *do not wish to be treated* like children who are stuffed with fairy tales and fables, they must ask their advisers, leaders or representatives, whether a *Party decision* was adopted on the question of Liquidatorism in December 1908 and what that decision was.

That decision contains a *condemnation* of Liquidatorism and the *explanation* of what it is.

> Liquidatorism is the "attempts on the part of a section of the Party intellectuals to *liquidate*" (*i.e.*, to dissolve, destroy, *abolish*, *close* down) "the existing organization of the Party and to replace it at all

* This refers to the decision of the Fifth Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.—*Ed.*

costs, even at the price of downright *renunciation of the program, tactics* and traditions" (*i.e.*, the past experience) "of the Party by an amorphous association functioning legally" (*i.e.*, in conformity with the laws, existing "openly").

Such was the *decision* of the Party on Liquidatorism, passed more than four years ago.

It is obvious from this decision what the essence of Liquidatorism is and why it is condemned. Its essence is the *renunciation* of the "underground," the abolition of the latter and its *replacement* at all costs by an amorphous association functioning legally. Therefore, it is *not* legal work, not the insistence on its necessity that the Party condemns. The Party condemns—and unreservedly condemns—the *replacement* of the old Party by something amorphous, "open," something which cannot be called a party.

The Party cannot exist unless it defends its existence, unless it unreservedly fights those who want to abolish and destroy it, who do not recognize it, who renounce it. This is obvious.

He who renounces the existing Party in the name of some new one must be told: try, build up a new party, but you cannot remain a member of the old, the present, the existing Party. Such is the meaning of the Party decision that was passed in December 1908, and it is obvious that no other decision could have been adopted on the question of the existence of the Party.

Of course, Liquidatorism is ideologically *connected* with *renegacy, with the renunciation of the program and tactics, with opportunism.* This is exactly what is indicated in the concluding part of the above-quoted decision. But Liquidatorism is not *only* opportunism. The opportunists are leading the Party on to a wrong, bourgeois path, the path of a liberal labour policy, but they *do not renounce* the Party itself, they do not dissolve it. Liquidatorism is *that brand* of opportunism that goes to the length of *renouncing* the Party. It is self-evident that the Party cannot exist *if it includes* those who do not recognize its existence. It is equally understandable that the renunciation of the "underground" under the existing conditions is tantamount to the renunciation of the old Party.

The question is, what is the attitude of the Liquidators towards the decision adopted by the Party in 1908?

This is the crux of the matter, this puts the sincerity and political honesty of the Liquidators to the test.

Not one of them, unless he has taken leave of his senses, will deny the fact that such a decision was adopted by the Party and has not been repealed.

And so the Liquidators resort to evasions; they either avoid the question and *withhold* from the workers the Party's decision of 1908, or exclaim (often accompanied with abuse) that this decision was carried by the Bolsheviks.

But abuse only betrays the weakness of the Liquidators. *Party decisions* have been carried by the *Mensheviks*, for example, the decision concerning municipalization, which was passed in Stockholm in 1906.* This is common knowledge. *Many Bolsheviks do not agree with that decision.* But not one of them denies that it is a *Party decision. In exactly the same way* the decision of 1908 concerning Liquidatorism is a *Party decision.* All subterfuges in regard to this question only signify a desire to mislead the workers.

Whoever wants to recognize the Party, not in words only, will not permit any subterfuges in this connection, and will insist on getting at the truth concerning the *decision of the Party* on the question of Liquidatorism. This decision has been *endorsed since 1909* by *all the pro-Party Mensheviks,* headed by Plekhanov who, in his *Dnevnik* (*Diary*) and in a whole series of other Marxian publications, explained on many occasions and quite definitely that he who wants to liquidate the Party canot be in the Party.

Plekhanov has been and will remain a Menshevik. Therefore the usual allusions of the Liquidators to the "Bolshevik" nature of the decisions of the Party *in 1908 are doubly wrong.*

The more abuse the Liquidators hurl at Plekhanov in the *Luch* and *Nasha Zarya,* the clearer is the proof that the Liquidators are in the wrong and that they are trying to obscure the truth by noise, shouting and brawling. Sometimes a novice is stunned by such methods, but the workers will find their bearings for all that, and will soon brush aside the abuse.

Is *the unity of the workers necessary? It is.*

Is the unity of the workers possible without the unity of the workers' organization? Obviously not.

What prevents the unity of the workers' party? Disputes over Liquidatorism.

Therefore, the workers must understand what these disputes are about in order that they *themselves may decide the destiny of their Party and save it.*

The first step in this direction is to read the *first* decision of the *Party* on Liquidatorism. The workers must know this decision thoroughly and study it carefully, brushing aside all attempts to evade the question or to sidetrack it. Having studied this decision, every worker will begin to understand the essence of *the question of Liquidatorism, why this question is so important* and so "acute," why this question has been facing the Party during the four years and more of the period of reaction.

In the next article we shall consider another important decision of the Party on Liquidatorism which was adopted about three and a half years ago, and then pass on to facts and documents which define how the question stands at present.

* The reference here is to the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.—*Ed.*

II. THE DECISION OF 1910

In our first article (*Pravda*, No. 289) we quoted the first and basic document with which those workers who wish to discover the truth in the present disputes must make themselves familiar, namely, the Party decision of December 1908 on the question of Liquidatorism.

Now we shall quote and examine another, no less important decision of the Party on the same question that was passed three and a half years ago, in January 1910.* This decision is especially important because it was carried *unanimously*: all the Bolsheviks, without exception, all the so-called *Vperyod*-ites, and finally (this is most important of all) *all* the Mensheviks and the present Liquidators without exception, and also all the "national" (*i.e.*, Jewish, Polish and Lettish) Marxists endorsed this decision.

We quote here in full the most important passage in this decision:

> "The historical situation of the Social-Democratic movement in the period of the bourgeois counter-revolution inevitably gives rise, as a manifestation of the bourgeois influence over the proletariat, on the one hand, to the renunciation of the illegal Social-Democratic Party, the debasement of its role and importance, the attempts to curtail the program and tactical tasks and slogans of consistent Social-Democracy, etc.; on the other hand, it gives rise to the renunciation of the Duma work of Social-Democracy and of the utilization of the legal possibilities, the failure to understand the importance of either, the inability to adapt consistent Social-Democratic tactics to the peculiar historical conditions of the present moment, etc.
>
> "An integral part of the Social-Democratic tactics under such conditions is the overcoming of both deviations by broadening and deepening the Social-Democratic work in all spheres of the class struggle of the proletariat and by explaining the danger of such deviations."

This decision clearly shows that three and a half years ago all the Marxists, as represented by all the tendencies without exception, had *unanimously* to recognize two *deviations* from the Marxian tactics. Both deviations were recognized as *dangerous*. Both deviations were explained as being due, not to accident, not to the evil intention of individual persons but to the "*historical situation*" of the labour movement in the given period.

Moreover, this unanimous decision of the Party points to the *class* origin and significance of these deviations. For Marxists do not confine themselves merely to bare references to ruin and disintegration. That disintegration, lack of faith, despondency, perplexity reign in the minds of many adherents of democracy and Socialism is obvious to all. It is not enough to admit this. It is necessary to understand the *class* origin of the discord

* This refers to the "unity" plenum of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. held in Paris, January 2-23, 1910.—*Ed.*

and disruption, to understand what *class* interests of the non-proletarian environment foster this "confusion" among the friends of the proletariat.

And the decision of the Party adopted three and a half years ago gave an answer to this important question: *the deviations* from Marxism are generated by the "bourgeois counter-revolution," they are generated by the "*bourgeois influence over the proletariat.*"

What are these deviations that threaten to deliver the proletariat to the influence of the bourgeoisie? One of these deviations, which is connected with *Vperyod*-ism and which renounced the Duma work of the Social-Democrats as well as the utilization of the legal possibilities, *has disappeared almost completely.* None of the Social-Democrats in Russia now preach these erroneous non-Marxian views. The *Vperyod*-ites (including Alexinsky and others) have begun to work in *Pravda* alongside the pro-Party Mensheviks.

The other *deviation* indicated in the decision of the Party is precisely *Liquidatorism.* This is obvious from the reference to the "renunciation" of the "underground" and to the "debasement" of its role and importance. Finally, we have a very precise document, published *three years ago* and refuted by no one, a document emanating from *all* the "national" Marxists and from Trotsky (better witnesses than whom the Liquidators could not produce); this document states directly that "in essence it would be desirable to call the tendency indicated in the resolution *Liquidatorism, which it is necessary to combat. . . .*"

Thus, the fundamental, the most important fact that everyone who wants to understand what the present controversy is about must know, is that: three and a half years ago the Party *unanimously* recognized *Liquidatorism* to be a "dangerous" deviation from Marxism, a deviation which it is necessary to combat, which expresses the "*bourgeois influence over the proletariat.*"

The interests of the bourgeoisie, which is biased against democracy and which is, generally speaking, counter-revolutionary, demand the *liquidation,* dissolution of the old party of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie is doing everything to disseminate and support all ideas directed towards the *liquidation* of the party of the working class. The bourgeoisie is striving to sow the seeds of renunciation of the old tasks, in order to "curtail" them, to cut and lop them off, to emasculate them, to substitute conciliation or an agreement with the Purishkeviches and Co. for the determined destruction of the foundations of their power.

Liquidatorism is, in fact, the introduction of these bourgeois ideas of renunciation and renegacy among the proletariat.

Such is the *class* significance of Liquidatorism as indicated in the *unanimous* decision of the Party three and a half years ago. It is in this that the entire Party sees the greatest harmfulness and danger of Liquidatorism, its pernicious effect on the labour movement, on the consolidation of an independent (in deeds and not in words) party of the working class.

Liquidatorism is not only the "liquidation" (*i.e.*, the dissolution, the destruction) of the old party of the working class, it also means the destruction of the *class independence* of the proletariat, the corruption of its class consciousness by *bourgeois* ideas.

We shall give an illustration of this appraisal of Liquidatorism in the next article, which will set forth in full the most important arguments of the Liquidatorist *Luch*. And now let us sum up briefly what we have stated above. The attempts of the *Luch*-ites in general, and of Messrs. Dan and Potresov in particular, to argue that "Liquidatorism" is an invention are subterfuges remarkable for their falsity, subterfuges based on the assumption that the readers of the *Luch* are completely uninformed. Actually, apart from the Party decision of 1908, there is a *unanimous* Party decision of 1910, which gives a complete appraisal of Liquidatorism as a bourgeois deviation from the proletarian path, a deviation that is harmful and dangerous to the working class. Only the enemies of the working class can hide or evade this Party appraisal.

III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE LIQUIDATORS TO THE DECISIONS OF 1908 AND 1910

In the preceding article (*Pravda*, No. 95 [299]), we quoted the exact words of the unanimous Party decision on Liquidatorism, which define the latter as a manifestation of bourgeois influence over the proletariat.

As we have pointed out, this decision was adopted in *January 1910*. Let us now examine the behaviour of those Liquidators who brazenly assure us that there is not and never was such a thing as Liquidatorism.

In February 1910, in No. 2 of the *Nasha Zarya*, which had just made its appearance, Mr. Potresov wrote bluntly that "*a party* representing a complete and organized hierarchy" (*i.e.*, ladder or system) "of institutions *does not exist*" and that it is impossible to liquidate "*what in reality no longer exists* as an organized body." (See *Nasha Zarya*, 1910, No. 2, p. 61.)

This was stated a month or even less *after* the unanimous decision of the Party!

And in March 1910, another Liquidatorist journal namely *Vozrozhdeniye*, having the same set of contributors, Potresov, Dan, Martynov, Yezhov, Martov, Levitsky and Co., stressed and popularly explained Mr. Potresov's words:

> "There is nothing to wind up and—we on our part" (*i.e.*, the editors of *Vozrozhdeniye*) "would add—the dream of re-establishing this hierarchy in its old, underground form is simply a harmful reactionary utopia which indicates the loss of political intuition by the representatives of a party which at one time was the most realistic of all." (*Vozrozhdeniye*, 1910, No. 5, p. 51.)

No party exists, and the idea of restoring it is a harmful utopia—these are clear and definite words. Here we have a plain and direct renunciation of the Party. The renunciation (and the invitation to the workers to do likewise) came from people who abandoned the underground and "dreamed" of an open party.

This *defection from the underground* was, *moreover*, quite definitely and openly supported by P. B. Axelrod in 1912, both in the *Nevsky Golos* (1912, No. 6) and in *Nasha Zarya* (1912, No. 6).

> "With the state of affairs in the Party as they are, to speak about 'non-factionalism,'" P. B. Axelrod wrote, "means behaving like an ostrich ... it means deceiving oneself and others.... Factional organization and consolidation constitute the prime duty and the most urgent task of the partisans of Party reform or to be more exact, of revolution."

Thus P. B. Axelrod is openly in favour of a *Party revolution, i.e.*, the destruction of the old Party and the formation of a new one.

In 1913, the *Luch*, No. 101, in an unsigned editorial stated plainly that "among the workers in some places there is even a revival and strengthening of sympathy for illegal work" and that this is "*a regrettable fact*." L. Sedov, the author of that article, admitted that the article "caused dissatisfaction" even among the partisans of the tactics of the *Luch*. (*Nasha Zarya*, 1913, No. 3, p. 49.) L. *Sedov's explanations in this connection* were such as to cause renewed dissatisfaction; this time it was one of the partisans of the *Luch*, namely An* who in the *Luch*, No. 181, wrote opposing Sedov. An protests against Sedov's assumption that "illegality is an obstacle to the political organization of our movement, to the building up of a workers' Social-Democratic Party." An ridicules L. Sedov, who leaves one "in the dark" as to whether illegality is desirable or not.

The editors of the *Luch* published a long postscript to An's article in which they found An "to be in the wrong in his criticism of L. Sedov," and declared themselves *in favour of Sedov*.

We will examine the arguments of the editors of the *Luch* as well as the Liquidatorist mistakes of An himself in their proper place. This is not the point we are discussing here. Just now it is up to us carefully to appraise the fundamental and principal conclusion to be drawn from the documents we have quoted above.

The entire Party, both in 1908 and in 1910, condemned and rejected Liquidatorism, and clearly and in detail explained the class origin and the danger of this tendency. *All* the Liquidatorist newspapers and journals—*Vozrozhdeniye* (1909-10), *Nasha Zarya* (1910-13), the *Nevsky Golos* (1912), and the *Luch* (1912-13)—*all*, *after* the most definite and even

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* *An*—Noah Jordania, one of the leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks-Liquidators. —*Ed.*

unanimous decisions have been adopted by the Party, reiterate thoughts and arguments that contain *obvious* Liquidatorism.

Even the devotees of the "Luch" are *forced* to declare that they disagree with these arguments, with this preaching. This is a fact. Therefore, to shout about the "baiting" of Liquidators, as Trotsky, Semkovsky and many other patronizers of Liquidatorism do, is downright dishonesty, for it is a crying distortion of the truth.

The truth proved by the documents I have quoted, which cover a period of more than *five* years (1908-13), is that the Liquidators, mocking all the Party decisions, continue to abuse and bait the Party, *i.e.*, "illegal work."

Every worker who wants seriously to examine the controversial and vexed questions *himself,* who wants to decide these questions for *himself,* must first of all master this truth and take independent measures to investigate and verify the above-quoted decisions of the Party and the arguments of the Liquidators. Only those who carefully study, ponder over and independently solve the problems and *destiny* of their Party deserve to be called Party members and builders of the workers' party. It is impossible to treat with indifference the question of whether it is the Party that is "guilty" of "baiting" (*i.e.*, of too trenchant and mistaken attacks on) the Liquidators *or* whether it is the Liquidators who are guilty of *directly violating* Party decisions, of *persistently advocating the liquidation, i.e., the destruction,* of the Party.

It is obvious that the Party cannot exist unless it fights the destroyers of the Party with all its might.

Having cited the documents on this fundamental question, we shall, in the next article, pass on to the appraisal of the *ideological* content of the preaching of an *"open Party."*

IV. THE CLASS MEANING OF LIQUIDATORISM

In the preceding articles (*Pravda,* Nos. 289, 299 and 314) we have shown that all the Marxists, both in 1908 and in 1910, *irrevocably condemned* Liquidatorism as the renunciation of the past. The Marxists explained to the working class that Liquidatorism is the instilling of bourgeois influence into the proletariat. And *all* the Liquidatorist publications, from 1909 up to 1913, flagrantly violated and are still violating the decisions of the Marxists.

Let us consider the slogan, an "open labour party," or "a struggle for an open party," which is still being advocated by the Liquidators in the *Luch* and *Nasha Zarya.*

Is this a Marxian, proletarian, or a liberal, bourgeois slogan?

The answer to this question must be sought not in the moods or the plans of the Liquidators or of other groups, but in the analysis of the inter-

relation of the social forces of Russia in the present period. The meaning of slogans is determined not by the intentions of their authors, but by the correlation of forces of *all* the classes in the country.

The feudal landowners and *their* "bureaucracy" are hostile to all changes *in the direction of political liberty. This is understandable. The bourgeoisie*, because of its economic position in a backward and semi-feudal country, *cannot but* strive for freedom. But the bourgeoisie fears the activity of the people *more* than it fears reaction. The year 1905 demonstrated this truth with particular clarity; this truth was thoroughly understood by the working class; it was only the opportunist and semi-liberal intellectuals who failed to understand it.

The bourgeoisie is both liberal and counter-revolutionary. Hence its im*potent and miserable reformism which borders on the ridiculous. Dreams* of reforms—*and fear* of settling accounts in real earnest with the feudal landowners, who not only refuse to grant reforms, but even take back those they have already granted. Preaching *reforms—and fear of a popular movement*. Striving to oust the feudal landowners—and fear of losing *their* support, fear of losing *their own* privileges. Upon this interrelation of classes is built up the system of June 3, which gives full power to the feudal landowners and privileges to the bourgeoisie.

The class position of the proletariat makes it altogether impossible for it to "share" the privileges or to *be afraid* of anyone losing them. That is why *selfishly narrow, miserable and dull-witted* reformism is *altogether* alien to the proletariat. As to the peasant masses—they are, on the one hand, immeasurably *oppressed*, and instead *of enjoying privileges they suf*fer from starvation; on the other hand, they are undoubtedly petty-bourgeois—hence, they inevitably vacillate between the liberals and the workers.

Such is the objective situation.

From this situation it obviously follows that the slogan of an open labour party is, by its class origin, a slogan of the counter-revolutionary liberals. It contains nothing save reformism; it does not contain even a hint *that the proletariat, the only class that is thoroughly democratic, is con*scious of its task of fighting the liberals for influence over the whole of democracy; there is not even a suggestion of destroying the very foundation of all the privileges of the feudal landowners, the "bureaucracy," etc., not a thought of the general foundations of political liberty and democratic constitution; instead, this slogan implies the tacit renunciation of the old, and consequently it implies renegacy and the dissolution (liquidation) of the workers' party.

In brief: this slogan carries into the midst of the workers in a period *of counter-revolution* the *preaching of the very thing* the liberal bourgeoisie is practising in its own midst. Therefore, had there been no Liquidators, the clever bourgeois progressives would have *had* to find, or hire, intellectuals in order to preach this to the working class!

Only brainless people can compare the *words* of the Liquidators with their *motives*. It is necessary to compare their words with the *deeds* and the objective position of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Look at these *deeds*. In 1902, the bourgeoisie was *in favour* of illegality. Struve was commissioned by it to publish the underground *Osvobozhdeniye*. When the labour movement led to October 17,* the liberals and the Cadets abandoned illegality, then repudiated it, and declared it to be unnecessary, mad, sinful and godless (*Vekhi*).—*Instead of* the underground, the liberal bourgeoisie advocated a *struggle for an open party*. This is a historical fact, confirmed by the incessant attempts at legalization made by the Cadets (1905-07) and the Progressives (1913).

Among the Cadets we see "open work and its secret organization"; the kind-hearted, *i.e.*, unconscious, Liquidator, A. Vlassov, has only paraphrased the deeds of the Cadets "in his own words."

Why did the liberals renounce illegality and adopt the slogan of "a struggle for an open party"? Is it because Struve is a traitor? No, just the opposite. Struve went over to the other side because the entire bourgeoisie turned. And the latter turned: 1) because it obtained privileges and on December 11, 1905,** and even on June 3, 1907,*** it was placed in the position of a *tolerated* opposition; 2) because it itself was mortally frightened by the popular movement. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party," when translated from the language of "high politics" into plain and intelligible language, means the following:

"Messieurs Landlords! Don't imagine that we want to push you off the earth. No, just move up a little and make room for us bourgeois" (an open party)—"we shall then defend you five times more 'cleverly,' cunningly and more 'scientifically than the Timoshkins**** and Sabler's priests."*****

In imitation of the Cadets, the slogan of "a struggle for an open party" was taken up by the petty bourgeoisie, the Narodniks. In August 1906, Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co. of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* renounced illegality, proclaimed the "struggle for an open party," and cut out from their program the consistently democratic "underground" slogans.

As a result of these philistines' reformist chatter about a "broad and

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* On October 17, 1905, the tsar, frightened by the revolution, issued a manifesto promising civil liberties as well as a State Duma with legislative powers.—*Ed.*

** The date of the promulgation of the law convening the First Duma.—*Ed.*

*** On June 3, 1907, the tsarist government dissolved the Second State Duma and issued a new electoral law for the Third State Duma, which restricted still more the rights of the workers and peasants. This date began to be referred to as the Third-of-June *coup d'état*, and the subsequent regime—the Third-of-June regime or the "Third-of-June system."—*Ed.*

**** *Timoshkins*—the appellation applied by Lenin to the reactionary members of the Duma, of whom the deputy Timoshkin was typical.—*Ed.*

***** Sabler's priests—the clerical deputies in the Third Duma who supported an extremely reactionary policy. Sabler was Procurator of the Holy Synod.—*Ed.*

open party" they, as is obvious to all, were left *without any* party at all, *without any* contact with the masses, and the Cadets have even left off *dreaming of having such contacts.*

Only in this way, only by analysing the position of the classes, by analysing the general history of the counter-revolution, is it possible to *understand* what Liquidatorism is. The Liquidators are petty-bourgeois intellectuals, *sent by the bourgeoisie to sow the seeds of liberal corruption among* the workers. The Liquidators are traitors to Marxism and traitors to democracy. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party" in their case (as well as in the case of the liberals and the Narodniks) only serves to camouflage their renunciation of the past and their *rupture with the working class.* This is a fact that has been proved both by the elections in the workers' electoral colleges for the Fourth Duma and by the history of the origin of the *Pravda,* the workers' paper. It was obvious to all that it was those who had not renounced the past and knew how to make use of "open work" and of all and sundry "possibilities" exclusively in the spirit of *that* past, and for the sake of strengthening, consolidating and developing it, who had contacts with the masses.

During the period of the Third-of-June regime it could not be otherwise.

In our next article we shall speak about the "curtailment" of the program and tactics by the Liquidators (*i.e.,* liberals).

V. THE SLOGAN OF STRUGGLE FOR AN OPEN PARTY

In the preceding article (*Pravda,* No. 123) we examined the objective meaning, *i.e.,* the meaning that is determined by the interrelation of classes, of the slogan "an open party" or "a struggle for an open party." This slogan is a slavish repetition of the tactics of the bourgeoisie, for it correctly expresses its renunciation of the revolution or its counter-revolutionary character.

Let us consider some of the attempts the Liquidators most frequently make to defend the slogan of "a struggle for an open party." Mayevsky, Sedov, Dan and all the *Luch*-ites try to confuse the open *Party* with open work or *activity.* Such confusion is downright sophistry, a trick, deception of the reader.

In the first place, the open activity of the Social-Democrats during the period 1904-13 is a *fact.* Open party is a *phrase* of the intellectuals, which covers up the renunciation of the Party. Secondly, the Party has repeatedly condemned Liquidatorism, *i.e.,* the slogan of an open party. But the Party, far from condemning open activities, has, on the contrary, repeatedly condemned those who neglected them or renounced them. In the third place, from 1904 to 1907, open activities were *especially* developed among *all* the Social-Democrats. But *not a single* tendency, *not a single* faction

of Social-Democracy then advanced the slogan "struggle for an open party."

This is a historical fact. It should be pondered over by those who wish to *understand* Liquidatorism.

Did the absence of the slogan "struggle for an open party" hamper open activities in 1904-07? Not in the least.

Why did no such slogan arise among the Social-Democrats *at that time?* Precisely because at that time there was no raging counter-revolution to draw a section of the Social-Democrats into extreme opportunism. It was only *too clear* at the time that the slogan "struggle for an open party" was an opportunist phrase, a renunciation of "illegality."

Gentlemen, try to grasp the meaning of this historical turn: during the period 1905, when there was a splendid development of open activities, there was *no* slogan of "struggle for an open party"; during the period of counter-revolution, when there is a weaker development of open activities, the slogans of renunciation of "illegality" and "struggle for an open party" crop up among a section of the Social-Democrats (who follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie).

Is not the meaning and the class significance of such a turn clear yet?

Finally, the fourth and most important circumstance. *Two kinds* of open activity, in two diametrically opposite directions, are possible (and may be observed): one in defence of the old and entirely in the *spirit* of the old, *in the name* of the slogans and the tactics of the old, and another, *against* the old, in the name of renunciation of the old, the belittling of the role and slogans of the old, etc.

The existence of these two kinds of open activity, hostile and irreconcilable in principle, in the period from 1906 (the Cadets and Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co.) to 1913 (the *Luch, Nasha Zarya*), is a most indisputable historical fact. Is it possible to restrain a smile when one hears a simpleton (or one who for a while plays the simpleton) say: what is there to quarrel about if both the one and the other carry on open activities? The dispute, my dear sir, is precisely about whether these activities should be carried on in defence of "illegality" and its spirit, or in order to degrade it, against it and not in its spirit! The dispute is only—just *"only"*! —about whether the given open work is being conducted in the liberal or in the consistently democratic spirit. The dispute is "only" about whether it is possible to *confine* oneself to open work: remember Mr. Liberal Struve who did not confine himself to it in 1902, but wholly "confined himself" to it in the years 1906-13.

Our Liquidators of the *Luch* cannot possibly comprehend that the slogan "struggle for an open party" means carrying into the midst of the workers liberal (Struve-ite) ideas, tricked out in the rags of "near-Marxian" catchwords.

Or take, for instance, the arguments of the editors of the *Luch* themselves, in their reply to An (No. 181):

> "The Social-Democratic Party is not limited to those few comrades whom the realities of life force to work underground. Truly, if the entire *Party* were limited to illegality, how many members would it have? Two to three hundred? And where would those thousands if not tens of thousands of workers be, who are actually bearing the brunt of the entire Social-Democratic work?"

For a man of comprehension this argument alone suffices to identify its authors as liberals. First, they are telling a deliberate untruth about the "underground." It numbers more than "hundreds." Secondly, all over the world the number of Party members, as compared with the number of workers carrying on Social-Democratic work, is "limited." For example, in Germany there are only one million members in the Social-Democratic Party, yet the number of votes cast for the Social-Democrats is about five million, and the proletariat numbers about fifteen million. The proportion of the number of Party members to the number of Social-Democrats is determined in the various countries by the differences in their historical conditions. In the third place, we have *nothing* that could replace our "underground." Thus, in *opposing* the Party, the *Luch* refers to the *non-Party* workers, or those who are *outside the Party*. This is the usual method of the liberal who tries to cut off the masses from their *class-conscious* vanguard. The *Luch* does not understand the relation between *Party* and *class*, just as the "Economists" in 1895-1901 failed to understand it. In the fourth place, our "Social-Democratic work" is real *Social-Democratic* work only in so far as it is conducted *in the spirit* of the old, under its slogans.

The arguments of the *Luch* are the arguments of liberal intellectuals, who, unwilling to join the actually existing Party organization, try to *destroy* that organization by inciting against it the non-Party, scattered mass, whose class consciousness is little developed. The German liberals do the same, alleging that the Social-Democrats do not represent the proletariat since their "Party" comprises "only" one-fifteenth of the proletariat!

Take the even more common argument advanced by the *Luch:* "We" are for an open party, "just as in Europe." The liberals and the Liquidators want a constitution and an open party, "as in Europe" *today*, but they do not want the path by which Europe reached that today.

Kossovsky, a Liquidator and Bundist, teaches us in the *Luch* to follow the example of the Austrians. But he forgets that the Austrians have had a constitution *since 1867*, and that they could not have had it without: 1) the movement of 1848; 2) the profound political crisis of 1859-66, when the *weakness* of the working class allowed Bismarck and Co. to *extricate* themselves by means of the famous "revolution from above." What then is the outcome of the discourses of Kossovsky, Dan, Larin and all the *Luch*-ites?

The only outcome is that they help to solve our crisis in the spirit of "revolution" *necessarily* "from above"! But such work *is precisely* the "work" of a Stolypin Labour Party.

No matter where we look—we see the Liquidators renouncing both Marxism and democracy.

In the next article we shall examine in detail their arguments concerning the necessity of curtailing our Social-Democratic slogans.

VI.

We must now consider the curtailment of Marxian slogans by the Liquidators. For this purpose it would be best to take the decisions of their August conference, but for obvious reasons it is possible to analyse these decisions only in the press published abroad. Here we are obliged to quote the *Luch*, which, in the article by L. S., in its issue No. 108 (194), gave a remarkably precise exposition of the whole essence, the whole spirit of Liquidatorism.

Mr. L. S. writes as follows:

> "The deputy Muranov so far recognizes only three partial demands, which, as is known, were the three pillars of the electoral platform of the Leninists: the complete democratization of the state system, an eight-hour day and the transfer of the land to the peasants. The *Pravda*, too, continues to maintain this point of view. Yet we, as well as the whole of European Social-Democracy" (read—"we, and also Milyukov, who assures us that, thank God, we have a constitution"), "see in the advancing of partial demands a method of agitation which may be crowned with success only if it reckons with the everyday struggle of the working masses. We think that only that which, on the one hand, is of fundamental importance for the further development of the labour movement, and on the other hand, may acquire urgency for the masses, should be advanced as the partial demand upon which at the given moment the Social-Democrats should concentrate their attention. Of the three demands advanced by the *Pravda*, only one—the eight-hour day—plays and can play a part in the everyday struggle of the workers. The other two demands may at the present moment serve as subjects for propaganda, but not for agitation. Concerning the difference between propaganda and agitation, see the brilliant pages of G. V. Plekhanov's pamphlet, *The Struggle Against Famine*." (L. S. has got into the wrong box; it is "painful" for him to recall Plekhanov's controversy in 1899-1902 with the "Economists" whom L. S. is copying!)
>
> "Apart from the eight-hour day, the demand for the right of association, the right to form any kind of organization, with the corres-

> ponding right of assembly and speech, both oral and printed, is a *partial demand advanced both by the requirements of the labour* movement and by the entire course of Russian life."

Here we have the tactics of the Liquidators. What L. S. *describes by the* words "complete democratization, etc.," and what he calls the "transfer of the land to the peasants" are *not*, you see, of "urgency for the masses," they are *not* advanced "by the requirements of the labour *movement*" and "the entire course of Russian life." How old are these arguments and how familiar are they to those who remember the *history* of Russian Marxian practice, its many years of struggle against the "Economists," who renounced the tasks of democracy! With what talent the *Luch* copies the views of Prokopovich and Kuskova, who *in those days* tried to entice the workers on to the liberal path!

However, let us examine the arguments of the *Luch* more closely. From *the point of view of common sense these arguments are sheer madness.* Is it really possible to assert, without having taken leave of one's senses, that the above-mentioned "peasant" demand *(i.e.,* one that is to benefit the peasants) is *not* of "urgency for the masses"? is *not* "advanced both by the requirements of the labour movement and by the entire course of Russian life"? This is not only an untruth, it is a howling absurdity. The entire history of Russia in the nineteenth century, the entire "course of Russian life" has *advanced* that question, has *made* it urgent, nay, most *urgent. This has been reflected in the whole of the legislation of Russia.* How could the *Luch* arrive at such a monstrous untruth?

It had to arrive at it, because the *Luch* is in bondage to *liberal* policy and the liberals are true to themselves when they reject (or, like the *Luch*, put off) the peasants' demand. The liberal bourgeoisie does so, because its *class* position forces it to humour the landlords and to oppose the people's movement.

The *Luch* brings to the workers the ideas of the liberal landlords and is *guilty of treachery to the democratic peasantry.*

Furthermore, can it be that only the right of association is of "urgency"? What about the inviolability of person? or the abolition of despotism and tyranny? or universal, etc., suffrage? or a single Chamber, etc? Every literate worker, everyone who bears in mind the recent past, knows extremely well that all this is urgent. *In thousands of articles and speeches* all the liberals acknowledge that all this is urgent. Why then did the *Luch* declare only one of these, albeit one of the most important *of liberties,* to be urgent, while the fundamental conditions of political liberty, of democracy and of a constitutional regime were struck out, put off, relegated to the archives of "propaganda," and excluded *from agitation?*

The reason, and the only reason, is that the *Luch* does not accept what is *unacceptable to the liberals.*

From the *standpoint of urgency* for the masses, of the requirements of

the labour movement and of the course of Russian life, there is *no* difference between the three demands of Muranov and of the *Pravda* (or, to put it briefly, the demands of consistent Marxists). The demands of the workers and the demands of the peasants and the general political demands are all of *equal* urgency for the masses, they are all *equally* advanced to the forefront both by the requirements of the labour movement and "the entire course of Russian life." All three demands are also alike from the standpoint of the "partialness" dear to our worshipper of moderation and accuracy: they are "partial" in relation to the final aims, but they are very high in relation, for example, to "Europe" in general.

Why then does the *Luch* accept the eight-hour day and reject the rest? Why did it decide *for* the workers that the eight-hour day does "play a part" in their everyday struggle whereas the general political and peasant demands do *not* play such a part? Facts show, on the one hand, that the workers in their daily struggle advance general political as well as peasant demands—and, on the other hand, that they often *fight* for more moderate reductions of the working day.

What is the trouble, then?

The trouble lies in the reformism of the *Luch*, which, as usual, *attributes* its own liberal narrow-mindedness to the "masses," to the "course of history," etc.

Reformism, in general, means that people confine themselves to agitation for changes which do not require the removal of the main foundations of the old ruling class, changes that are *compatible* with the *preservation* of these foundations. The eight-hour day is compatible with the preservation of the power of capital. The Russian liberals, in order to attract the workers are themselves prepared to endorse ("as far as possible") this demand. On the other hand, those demands for which the *Luch* does not want to "agitate" are *incompatible* with the preservation of the foundations of the pre-capitalist period, the period of serfdom.

The *Luch* eliminates from the agitation precisely that which is not acceptable to the liberals, who do not want to abolish the power of the landlords, but want only to share their power and privileges. The *Luch* eliminates precisely that which is incompatible with the point of view of reformism.

That's the whole point!

Neither Muranov, nor the *Pravda*, nor any Marxist rejects partial demands. That is nonsense. Take insurance, for example. We reject the *deception* of the people by idle talk about partial demands by means of *reformism*. We reject as utopian, self-seeking and false the *liberal reformism* in present-day Russia, the reformism based on constitutional illusions and full of the spirit of servility to the landlord. That is *the* point which the *Luch* tries to confuse and hide by phrases about "partial demands" in general, although it itself admits that neither Muranov nor the *Pravda* rejects certain "partial demands."

The *Luch* curtails the Marxian slogans, *tries to fit them into the narrow*, reformist, liberal measure, and this carries bourgeois ideas into the ranks of the workers.

The struggle the Marxists waged against the Liquidators is nothing but an expression of the struggle of the progressive workers against the liberal bourgeois for influence over the masses of the people, for their political enlightenment and education.

Published in separate issues of the *Pravda* Nos. 85 (289), 95 (299), 110 (314), 123 (327), 124 (328) and 126 (330) of April 28 [15], May 9 [April 26], May 25 [12], June 12 [May 30], June 13 [May 31] and June 15 [2], 1913

DISRUPTION OF UNITY UNDER COVER OF OUTCRIES FOR UNITY

The questions concerning the present-day working-class movement are in many respects vexed questions, particularly for the representatives of the recent past of this movement (*i.e.*, of the stage which historically has just drawn to a close). In the forefront of these questions stand the questions of so-called factionalism, schismatism, and so forth. One often hears the intellectuals who participate in the working-class movement making nervous, feverish, almost hysterical appeals not to raise these vexed questions. Those who experienced the long years of conflict between the various trends among the Marxists since 1900-01, for example, may naturally think it superfluous to repeat many of the arguments on the subject of these vexed questions.

But not many are left today who took part in the fourteen years' conflict among the Marxists (not to speak of the eighteen or nineteen years' conflict counting from the appearance of the first symptoms of "Economism"). The overwhelming majority of the workers now in the ranks of the Marxists either do not remember the old conflict, or have no knowledge of it at all. To the overwhelming majority (as, incidentally, was shown by the enquiry instituted by our magazine), these vexed questions are a matter of exceptionally great interest. We therefore intend to deal with these questions, which have been raised *as it were* anew (and for the younger generation of the workers they are really new) by Trotsky's "non-factional workers' magazine," *Borba (Struggle)*.

I. "FACTIONALISM"

Trotsky calls his new magazine "non-factional." He puts this word in the top line in his advertisements; this word is stressed in every key in the editorial articles in the *Borba* itself, as well as in the Liquidatorist *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta (Northern Workers' Gazette)*, where an article by Trotsky on the *Borba* was published before that magazine appeared.

What is "non-factionalism"?

Trotsky's "workers' magazine" is Trotsky's magazine *for* workers, for it bears no trace either of workers' initiative in founding it, or of connection

with working-class organizations. Desiring to write in a popular style, Trotsky in his workers' magazine, explains for the benefit of his readers the meaning of such words as "territory," "factor," and so forth.

This is very good. But why not also explain to the workers the meaning of the word "non-factionalism"? Is that word *more* intelligible than the words "territory" and "factor"?

No, that is not the reason. The reason is that by means of the label "non-factionalism." the worst representatives of the worst remnants of factionalism *misled* the younger generation of workers. It is worth while devoting a little time to explaining this.

Factionalism was the main distinguishing feature of the Social-Democratic Party in a definite historical period. Which period? From 1903 to 1911.

To explain the nature of this factionalism more clearly we must recall the concrete conditions that existed in, say, 1906-07. At that time, the Party was united, there was no split, but factionalism existed, *i.e.*, in the united party there were *in fact two* factions, two actually separate organizations. The local workers' organizations were united, but on every important issue the two factions drew up two sets of tactics. The advocates of the respective tactics disputed among themselves in the united workers' organizations (as was the case, for example, during the discussion of the slogans: Duma, or Cadet, Cabinet, in 1906, or during the elections of delegates for the London Congress in 1907), and questions were decided *by a majority vote.* One faction was defeated at the Stockholm Unity Congress (1906), the other was defeated at the London Unity Congress (1907).

These are commonly known facts in the history of organized Marxism in Russia.

It is sufficient to remember these commonly known facts to realize what glaring falsehoods Trotsky is spreading.

Since 1912, for over two years, there has been *no* factionalism among the organized Marxists in Russia, no controversies over tactics in *united* organizations, at united *conferences* and congresses. There is a *complete* breach between the Party, which in January 1912 formally announced that the Liquidators do *not* belong to it, and the Liquidators.* Trotsky often calls this state of affairs a "split," and with this appellation we will deal separately later on. But it remains an undoubted fact that the term "factionalism" is *misleading.*

As we have said already, this term is a repetition, an uncritical, senseless, meaningless repetition *of what was true yesterday*, *i.e.*, in a period that has already passed. When Trotsky talks to us about the "chaos of factional strife" (*cf.* No. 1, pp. 5, 6, and many others) we realize at once *which* period of the past his words echo.

Examine the present state of affairs from the viewpoint of the young Russian workers who now constitute nine-tenths of the organized Marxists

* See this volume pp. 481-82.—*Ed.*

in Russia. They see *three* mass expressions of the different views, or trends of the working-class movement: the "*Pravda*-ites" gathered around a newspaper with a circulation of 40,000, the "Liquidators" (15,000 circulation) and Left Narodniks (10,000 circulation). The circulation figures reveal to the reader the degree to which the respective tenets bear a *mass* character.

The question is, what has "chaos" to do with the subject? Trotsky is fond of sonorous and empty catchphrases, everybody knows that, but the catchword "chaos" is *not only* a catchword, *in addition,* it signifies the transplanting (or rather, a vain attempt to transplant) to Russian soil, in the present period, the relations that existed *abroad* in a *bygone* period. This is the whole point.

There is no "chaos" whatever in the struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks. It is to be hoped that *even* Trotsky will not dare to assert that there is. The struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks has been going on for over thirty years, ever since Marxism came into being. The cause of this struggle is the radical divergence of interests and viewpoints of two different classes, the proletariat and the peasantry. If there is any "chaos" anywhere, it is only in the heads of cranks who fail to understand this.

What, then, remains? "Chaos" in the struggle between the Marxists and the Liquidators? This, too, is wrong, for a struggle against a *trend* which the entire Party recognized as a trend and condemned as far back as 1908, cannot be called chaos. And everybody who has the least regard for the history of Marxism in Russia knows that Liquidatorism is most closely and inseverably connected, even as regards its leaders and supporters, with "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "Economism" (1894-1903). Hence, here, too, we have a history extending over nearly twenty years. Anybody who regards the history of his own Party as "chaos" shows that he is an utter numbskull.

But let us examine the present situation *from the point of view* of Paris, or Vienna. At once the whole scene changes. *In addition* to the "*Pravda*-ites" and "Liquidators," we see *no less than five Russian* "factions," *i.e.*, separate groups which claim membership of the Social-Democratic Party: Trotsky's group, two *Vperyod* groups, the "pro-Party Bolsheviks"* and the "pro-Party Mensheviks." All Marxists in Paris and in Vienna (for the purpose of illustration I take two particularly large centres) are perfectly well aware of this.

Here Trotsky is right in a certain sense; this is indeed factionalism, this is indeed chaos!

"Factionalism," *i.e.*, nominal unity (all *claim* that they belong to one

* Pro-Party Bolsheviks—an exceedingly small group of conciliators who were dubbed by Lenin "inconsistent Trotskyites." The group of conciliators included amongst others Kamenev, Rykov and Zinoviev. Together with the Liquidators, the *Vperyod*-ites, Trotsky and others, the conciliators carried on a bitter fight against Lenin and opposed the decisions adopted at the Prague Conference.—*Ed.*

Party) and actual disunity (for, in fact, all the groups are independent *of each other and enter into negotiations and agreements* with each other as sovereign powers).

"Chaos," *i.e.*, the absence of (1) objective and verifiable proof that these factions have connections with the working-class movement in Russia, and (2) absence of any data to enable us to judge *the actual-ideological and* political features of these factions. Take a period of two full years—1912 and 1913. As everybody knows, this was a period of revival and growth of the working-class movement, when every trend or tendency which bore anything of a *mass* character (and in politics this mass character alone counts) *could not help* exercising some influence in the Fourth Duma elections, in the strike movement, in the legal newspaper, in the trade unions, *in the insurance election campaign, and so forth. Throughout these two* years not a single one of these five factions abroad asserted itself in the slightest degree *in any* of the activities of the mass working-class movement in Russia just *enumerated!*

This is a fact that anybody can easily verify.

And this fact proves that we are right when we say that Trotsky is a representative of the "worst remnants of factionalism."

Although he claims to be non-factional, Trotsky is known to everybody who is in the least familiar with the working-class movement in Russia as the representative of "Trotsky's *faction.*" Here there is factionalism, for *we see the two essential symptoms of it: (1) nominal recognition of unity* and (2) group segregation in fact. Here there are remnants of factionalism, for there is no evidence whatever of any real connection with the mass *working-class movement in* Russia.

And lastly, it is the worst form of factionalism, for there is *no* ideological and political definiteness. It cannot be denied that both the *Pravda*-ites (even our determined opponent L. Martov admits that we stand "solid and disciplined" around universally known formal decisions on all questions) and the Liquidators (they, or at all events the most prominent of them, have very definite features, namely Liberal and not Marxian) possess this definiteness.

It cannot be denied that some of the factions which, like Trotsky's faction, exist exclusively from the Vienna-Paris, but by no means from the Russian *point of view*, possess a certain amount of definiteness. For example, the *Mach-ite* theories of the Mach-ite *Vperyod* group are definite; the emphatic repudiation of these theories and defence of Marxism, in *addition to the theoretical condemnation of* Liquidatorism by the "pro-Party Mensheviks," is definite.

Trotsky, however, possesses no ideological and political definiteness, for his patent for "non-factionalism" is *merely (as we shall soon see in greater* detail) a patent to *flit* freely to and fro, from one faction to another.

To sum up:

1) Trotsky does not explain, nor does he understand, *the historical*

significance of the *ideological* disagreements among the various Marxian trends and factions, although these disagreements run through the twenty years' history of Social-Democracy and concern the fundamental questions of the present day (as we shall show later on);

2) Trotsky fails to understand that the main specific features of *factionalism* is nominal recognition of unity and actual disunity;

3) Under cover of "non-factionalism," Trotsky is championing the interests of one of the factions abroad, the faction which particularly lacks definite principles and has no basis in the working-class movement in Russia.

All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky's phrases, but they are meaningless.

II. THE SPLIT

We are told: "Although there is no factionalism, *i.e.*, nominal recognition of unity, but actual disunity, among you, *Pravda*-ites, there is something worse, namely, schismatism." This is exactly what is said by Trotsky who, unable to think out his ideas or to put any logic into his phrases, raises a howl against factionalism at one moment, and at another moment shouts: "schismatism is winning one suicidal victory after another" (No. 1, p. 6).

This statement can have only one meaning: "The *Pravda*-ites are winning one victory after another" (this is an objective, verifiable fact, established by a study of the mass working-class movement in Russia during, say, 1912 and 1913), *but I, Trotsky*, denounce the *Pravda*-ites (1) as schismatists, and (2) as suicidal politicians.

Let us examine this.

First of all we will express our thanks to Trotsky: Not long ago (from August 1912 to February 1914) he was at one with F. Dan, who, as is well known, threatened to "*kill*" anti-Liquidatorism, and called upon others to do so. At present, Trotsky does not threaten to "kill" our trend (and our Party—don't be angry Citizen Trotsky, this is true), he only prophesies that it will kill *itself*!

This is much milder, isn't it? It is almost "non-factional," isn't it?

But let us put joking aside (although joking is the only way of retorting mildly to Trotsky's intolerable phrasemongering).

"Suicide" is a mere catchphrase, an empty phrase, mere "Trotskyism."

Schismatism is a serious political accusation. This accusation is repeated against us in a thousand keys by the Liquidators and by all the above enumerated, actually existing—from the viewpoint of Paris and Vienna—groups.

And all of them repeat this serious political accusation in an amazingly irresponsible way. Look at Trotsky. He admitted that "schismatism is win-

ning (read: the *Pravda*-ites are winning) one suicidal victory after another." And to this he adds:

> "*Numerous advanced workers, in a state of utter political bewilderment, themselves often become active agents of a split*" (No. 1, p. 6).

Is it possible to find a more glaring example of irresponsibility on this question than that revealed by these words?

You accuse us of being schismatists when the only thing that confronts us in the arena of the working-class movement of Russia is Liquidatorism. Hence, you think that our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong? And indeed, *all* the groups abroad that we enumerated above, no matter how much they may differ from each other, are agreed that our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong, that it is "schismatic."

This, too, reveals the similarity (and fairly close political kinship) between *all* these groups and the Liquidators.

If our attitude towards Liquidatorism is wrong in theory, in principle, then Trotsky should say so *straightforwardly*, and state *definitely*, without *equivocation, why he thinks it is wrong. But Trotsky has been evading* this extremely important point *for years.*

If the practical experience of the movement proves that our attitude towards Liquidatorism is refuted, then this experience should be analysed; but Trotsky fails to do this, too. "Numerous advanced workers," he admits, "become *active agents* of a split" (read: active agents of the *Pravda*-ite line, tactics, system and organization).

What is the cause of the deplorable fact, which, as Trotsky admits, is confirmed by experience, that the *advanced* workers, and *numerous* advanced workers at that, stand for *Pravda?*

The "utter political bewilderment" of these advanced workers, answers Trotsky.

Needless to say, this explanation is extremely flattering to Trotsky, to all five factions abroad, and to the Liquidators. Trotsky is very fond of giving, "with a learned air of an expert," in pompous and sonorous terms, *explanations of historical phenomena that are flattering to Trotsky.* Since "numerous advanced workers" become "active agents" of a political and Party line which does not harmonize with Trotsky's line, Trotsky settles the question unhesitatingly, straight off the bat: these advanced workers are "in a state of utter political bewilderment," while he, Trotsky, is evidently "in a state of" political firmness and clarity, and keeps to the right line! ... And this very same Trotsky, beating his breast, denounces factionalism, coterie methods, and the efforts of intellectuals to impose their will on the workers! ...

Reading things like these, one involuntarily asks oneself: Is it from a lunatic asylum that these voices come?

Before Trotsky's journal appeared, the *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazéta* published a vicious comment stating that the physiognomy of this journal was "unclear" and that there had been "rather a lot of talk in Marxist circles" about this journal. *Put Pravdy* (No. 37) was naturally obliged to expose this falsehood. It said: "there was talk in Marxist circles" about a *secret memorandum written by* Trotsky *against* the *Luch*-ites; Trotsky's physiognomy and his split from the August *bloc* were perfectly "clear."

4. An, the well-known leader of the Caucasian Liquidators who had attacked L. Sedov (for which he received a public dressing down from F. Dan and Co.) now appeared in the *Borba*. It remains "unclear" whether the Caucasians desire to go with Trotsky or with Dan.

5. The Lettish Marxists, who constituted the only real organization in the "August bloc," had *formally* withdrawn from it, stating (in 1914) in the resolution of their last Congress that

> "*the attempt on the part of the conciliators to unite at all costs with the Liquidators (the August Conference 1912) proved fruitless, and the uniters themselves became ideologically and politically dependent on the Liquidators.*"

This was stated after eighteen months' experience by an organization which had itself been *neutral* and had not desired to establish connection with *either* of the two centres. This decision of *neutral* people should be all the more weighty for Trotsky!

Enough, is it not?

The people who accused us of being schismatists, of being unable, or unwilling, to live in harmony with the Liquidators, were *themselves* unable to live in harmony with them. The August *bloc* proved to be a fiction and collapsed.

By concealing this collapse from his readers, Trotsky is deceiving them.

The experience of our opponents has proved that we are right, it has proved that it is impossible to co-operate with the Liquidators.

IV. A CONCILIATOR'S ADVICE TO THE "SEVEN"

The editorial article in issue No. 1 of the *Borba* entitled "The Split in the Duma Group" contains the advice of a conciliator to the seven pro-Liquidator (or inclining towards Liquidatorism) members of the State Duma. The gist of this advice is contained in the following words:

> "*to consult primarily with the six in all cases when it is necessary to* reach an agreement with other groups. . . ." (P. 29.)

This is the wise counsel which, among other things, is evidently the cause of Trotsky's disagreement with the Liquidators of the *Luch*. The *Pravda*-

ites have held this opinion ever since the outbreak of the conflict between the two groups in the Duma, ever since the resolution of the summer (1913) conference* was adopted. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma has reiterated in the *press*, even after the split, that it continues to adhere to this position, in spite of the repeated refusals of the "seven."

At the very outset, at the time the resolution of the summer conference was adopted, we were of the opinion, and are now, that *agreements* on questions concerning activities in the *Duma* are desirable and possible. Considering that such agreements have been repeatedly arrived at with the petty-bourgeois peasant democrats (Trudoviks), it goes without saying that they are all the more possible and necessary with the petty-bourgeois, Liberal-Labour politicians.

We must not exaggerate disagreements, but we must look facts straight in the face. The "seven" are men who are inclining towards Liquidatorism, who yesterday entirely followed the lead of Dan, and today are longingly turning their gaze from Dan to Trotsky and back again to Dan. The Liquidators are a group of legalists who have broken away from the Party and are pursuing a Liberal-Labour policy. In view of the fact that this group repudiates the "underground," unity with it in matters concerning Party organization and the working-class movement is out of the question. Whoever thinks differently is profoundly mistaken and fails to take into account the depth of the changes that have taken place since 1908.

But *agreements* on certain questions with this group which is outside of, or near, the Party, are of course permissible; we *must* always compel this group, too, like the Trudoviks, to choose between the workers' (*Pravda*-ite) policy and the Liberal policy. For example, on the question of fighting for freedom of the press the Liquidators clearly oscillated between the Liberal formulation of the question, which repudiated, or lost sight of, the uncensored press, and the opposite policy, the workers' policy.

Within the limits of policy in the *Duma*, where the most important *extra-Duma* questions are not directly raised, agreements with the seven Liberal-Labour deputies are possible and desirable. On this point Trotsky has shifted *from* the Liquidators' position *to* that of the Party summer (1913) conference.

It must not be forgotten, however, that by agreement a group which is outside the Party means something entirely different from what Party people usually mean by this term. By "agreement" in the Duma, non-Party people mean "*drawing up* a tactical resolution, or line." Party people mean by agreement an attempt to *enlist* others in the work of carrying out the Party line.

For example, the Trudoviks have no Party. By agreement they mean

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* The "summer" or "August" 1913 conference of the Central Committee and Party workers (termed such for reasons of secrecy) held September 22-October 1, 1913 at Poronino (in the vicinity of Cracow).—*Ed.*

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ites have held this opinion ever since the outbreak of the conflict between the two groups in the Duma, ever since the resolution of the summer (1913) conference* was adopted. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma has reiterated in the *press*, even after the split, that it continues to adhere to this position, in spite of the repeated refusals of the "seven."

At the very outset, at the time the resolution of the summer conference was adopted, we were of the opinion, and are now, that *agreements* on questions concerning activities in the *Duma* are desirable and possible. Considering that such agreements have been repeatedly arrived at with the petty-bourgeois peasant democrats (Trudoviks), it goes without saying that they are all the more possible and necessary with the petty-bourgeois, Liberal-Labour politicians.

We must not exaggerate disagreements, but we must look facts straight in the face. The "seven" are men who are inclining towards Liquidatorism, who yesterday entirely followed the lead of Dan, and today are longingly turning their gaze from Dan to Trotsky and back again to Dan. The Liquidators are a group of legalists who have broken away from the Party and are pursuing a Liberal-Labour policy. In view of the fact that this group repudiates the "underground," unity with it in matters concerning Party organization and the working-class movement is out of the question. Whoever thinks differently is profoundly mistaken and fails to take into account the depth of the changes that have taken place since 1908.

But *agreements* on certain questions with this group which is outside of, or near, the Party, are of course permissible; we *must* always compel this group, too, like the Trudoviks, to choose between the workers' (*Pravda*-ite) policy and the Liberal policy. For example, on the question of fighting for freedom of the press the Liquidators clearly oscillated between the Liberal formulation of the question, which repudiated, or lost sight of, the uncensored press, and the opposite policy, the workers' policy.

Within the limits of policy in the *Duma*, where the most important *extra-Duma* questions are not directly raised, agreements with the seven Liberal-Labour deputies are possible and desirable. On this point Trotsky has shifted *from* the Liquidators' position *to* that of the Party summer (1913) conference.

It must not be forgotten, however, that by agreement a group which is outside the Party means something entirely different from what Party people usually mean by this term. By "agreement" in the Duma, non-Party people mean "*drawing up a tactical resolution*, or line." Party people mean by agreement an attempt to *enlist* others in the work of carrying out the Party line.

For example, the Trudoviks have no Party. By agreement they mean

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* The "summer" or "August" 1913 conference of the Central Committee and Party workers (termed such for reasons of secrecy) held September 22-October 1, 1913 at Poronino (in the vicinity of Cracow).—*Ed.*

voking terrible Trotsky to another outburst of displeasure) will laugh in the faces of these project-mongers.

"Detailed tactical resolutions," they will tell them, "are drawn up among us (we don't know how it is done among you non-party people), by party congresses and conferences, for example, 1907, 8, 10, 12 and 13. We shall have much pleasure in acquainting uninformed foreigners, and also forgetful Russians, with our Party decisions, and still greater pleasure in asking the representatives of the 'seven,' or 'Augustians'* or 'Levitsians'** or anybody else, to acquaint us with the resolutions of their congresses, or conferences, and to bring up at their next congresses the definite question of the attitude they should adopt towards our resolutions, or towards the resolution of the neutral Lettish Congress of 1914, etc."

This is what the "advanced workers" of Russia will say to the various project-mongers, and this *has already been said* in the Marxist press, for example, by the organized Marxists of St. Petersburg. Does Trotsky think fit to ignore these published terms to the Liquidators? The worse for Trotsky. It is our duty to warn our readers that "unity" (the August type of "unity"?) project-mongering which refuses to reckon with the will of the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia is utterly ridiculous.

V. TROTSKY'S LIQUIDATORIST VIEWS

In his new journal Trotsky tried to say as little as possible about the substance of his own views. *Put Pravdy* (No. 37) has already noted that Trotsky did not utter a word either on the question of the "underground" or on the slogan of fighting for an open party, etc. That, among other things, is why we say that when attempts are made to form a separate organization which is to have *no* ideological and political features, it is *the worst* form of factionalism.

But although Trotsky refrained from expounding his views openly, a number of passages in his journal reveals what ideas he smuggles in surreptitiously.

In the very first editorial article, in the first issue of his journal, we read the following:

> "The pre-revolution Social-Democratic Party in this country was a *workers'* party only in ideas and aims. Actually, it was an organization of the Marxist intelligentsia, which led the awakened working class. . . ." (5)

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* *Augustians*—those who took part in the *August bloc*.—*Ed.*

** *Levitsians* (from the Polish word *Levitsa*—the left)—members of the Polish Socialist organization formed in 1906 as a result of the split in the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). The Levitsians were close to the Mensheviks-Liquidators and together with them joined the August bloc.—*Ed.*

the "voluntary," so to speak, "drawing up" of a line with the Cadets one day, and with the Social-Democrats another day. When we, however, speak of agreement with the Trudoviks we mean something entirely different. We have Party decisions on all the important questions of tactics, and we will *never depart from these decisions.* When *we say agreement with the Trudoviks* we mean *winning them* to our side, *convincing* them that we are right, *not rejecting* common action against the Black-Hundreds and against the Liberals.

How far Trotsky has forgotten (after all, his association with the Liquidators has had some effect on him!) this elementary difference between the Party and non-Party point of view on agreements is shown by the following argument of his:

> "The accredited representatives of the International must bring together the two sections of our divided Parliamentary group and jointly with them ascertain the points of agreement and points of disagreement.... A detailed tactical resolution formulating the principles of parliamentary tactics may be drawn up...." (No. 1, pp. 29-30.)

This is a characteristic and typical example of the Liquidatorist method *of formulating the question! Trotsky's journal forgets about the Party;* after all, is such a trifle worth remembering?

When different parties in Europe (Trotsky is fond of talking in and out of season about Europe-ism) conclude agreements, or unite, they do it in the following way: their respective representatives meet and first of all ascertain the points of disagreement (precisely what the International proposed in relation to Russia, without in the least including in the resolution Kautsky's thoughtless statement that "the old party no longer exists"). *After ascertaining the points of disagreement, the representatives decide what decisions* (resolutions, conditions, etc.) on questions of tactics, organization, etc., *should be submitted to the congresses of the two parties.* If they succeed in arriving at unanimous decisions, the congresses decide whether to adopt them or not. If *different* proposals are made, they too, *are submitted for final decision to the congresses of the two parties.*

The Liquidators and Trotsky are "attracted" only by *European* models of opportunism, they are not in the least attracted by the European models of party methods.

"Detailed tactical resolutions" will be drawn up by the members of the Duma!! This example should serve the Russian "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky has good reason to be displeased, as a striking illustration of the lengths to which the coteries in Vienna and in Paris—who persuaded even Kautsky *that there was "no party" in Russia—go in their ludicrous* project-mongering. But although it is sometimes possible to fool foreigners on this score, the Russian "advanced workers" (even at the risk of pro-

voking terrible Trotsky to another outburst of displeasure) will laugh in the faces of these project-mongers.

"Detailed tactical resolutions," they will tell them, "are drawn up among us (we don't know how it is done among you non-party people), by party congresses and conferences, for example, 1907, 8, 10, 12 and 13. We shall have much pleasure in acquainting uninformed foreigners, and also forgetful Russians, with our Party decisions, and still greater pleasure in asking the representatives of the 'seven,' or 'Augustians'* or 'Levitsians'** or anybody else, to acquaint us with the resolutions of their congresses, or conferences, and to bring up at their next congresses the definite question of the attitude they should adopt towards our resolutions, or towards the resolution of the neutral Lettish Congress of 1914, etc."

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This is the old Liberal and Liquidator song, which is really the prelude to the *repudiation* of the Party. This song is based on a distortion of historical facts. *The strikes of 1895-96 already gave rise to a mass working-class movement* which both in ideas and organization was connected with the Social-Democratic movement. Did "the intelligentsia *lead* the working class" in these strikes and in this economic and non-economic agitation!!?

Or take the following exact statistics of political offenses in the period 1901-03 compared with the preceding period.

OCCUPATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE MOVEMENT FOR EMANCIPATION PROSECUTED FOR POLITICAL OFFENSES (PER CENT)

Period	Agriculture	Industry and Commerce	Liberal professions and Students	No definite *occupation*, and no occupation
1884—1890	7.1	15.1	53.3	19.9
1901—1903	9.0	46.1	28.7	8.0

We see that in the 'eighties, when there was as yet *no* Social-Democratic Party in Russia, and when the movement was "Narodnik," the intelligentsia predominated, they accounted for over half the participants.

But we get *an entirely different picture in* 1901-03, *when a Social-Demo*cratic Party already existed, and when the old *Iskra* was active. In this period the intelligentsia already constitutes the *minority* among the participants in the movement; the *workers* ("industry and commerce") are far more numerous than the intelligentsia, and the workers and peasants together constitute more than half the total.

It was precisely in the conflict of trends within the Marxist movement *that the petty-bourgeois intellectual wing* of Social-Democracy made itself felt, beginning with "Economism" (1895-1903) and continuing with "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "Liquidatorism" (1908-14). Trotsky repeats the Liquidatorist slander against the Party and is afraid to touch the history of the twenty years' conflict of trends within the Party.

Here is another example.

"In its attitude towards parliamentarism, Russian Social-Democracy passed through the same three stages... [as in other countries]... first 'boycottism'... then the recognition *of parliamentary tactics in* principle, but... [that magnificent "but," the very same "but" which *Shchedrin translated as: The ears never grow higher than the fore*head, never!]... for purely agitational purposes... and lastly, the

> presentation from the rostrum of the Duma... of current demands...." (No. 1, p. 34.)

This, too, is a Liquidatorist distortion of history. The distinction between the second and third stages was invented in order to smuggle in defence of reformism and opportunism. Boycottism as a stage in "the attitude of Social-Democracy towards parliamentarism" never existed *either* in Europe (where there was and still is anarchism) *or* in Russia, where the boycott of the Bulygin Duma, for example, applied *only* to a definite institution, was *never* linked up with "parliamentarism," and was engendered by the peculiar nature of the struggle between Liberalism and Marxism for the continuation of the assault. Trotsky says absolutely nothing at all about the way this struggle affected the conflict between the two trends of Marxism!

When dealing with history one must explain concrete questions and the class roots of the different trends. Anybody who takes the trouble to study from the Marxist point of view the class struggle and the conflict of trends over the question of participating in the Bulygin Duma will see the roots of the Liberal-Labour policy. But Trotsky "deals with" history only in order to *evade* concrete questions and to *invent* a justification, or a semblance of justification, for the present-day opportunists!

> "...Actually, all trends," he writes, "employ the same methods of fighting and building." — "The outcries about the Liberal danger in our working-class movement are simply a crude, sectarian travesty of reality" (No. 1, p. 5 and p. 35).

This is a very clear defence of the Liquidators, and a very wrathful one. But we will take the liberty of quoting at least one tiny fact, one of the very latest. Trotsky merely hurls phrases about; we would like the workers themselves to ponder over this fact.

It is a fact that the *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, of March 13, wrote the following:

> "*Instead of emphasizing the definite, concrete task that confronts the working class, viz., to compel the Duma to throw out the Bill [on the press], a diffuse formula is proposed of fighting for the 'uncurtailed slogans', and at the same time illegal press is widely advertised, which can only lead to the relaxation of the workers' struggle for their legal press.*"

This is a clear, precise, documentary defence of the Liquidatorist policy and a criticism of the *Pravda*-ite policy. Well, will any literate person say that both trends employ "the same methods of fighting and building" on this question? Will any literate person say that the Liquidators are *not* pur-

suing a *Liberal*-Labour policy on this question, that the Liberal danger in the working-class movement is purely imaginary?

Trotsky avoids facts and concrete references precisely because they relentlessly *refute all his angry outcries and pompous phrases. It is quite easy, of course, to adopt a pose and say:* "a crude sectarian travesty." *Nor is it difficult to add a still more stinging and pompous catchphrase, such* as "emancipation from conservative factionalism."

But isn't this very cheap? Is not this weapon borrowed from the arsenal of the period when Trotsky posed in all his brilliance before audiences of high school boys?

Nevertheless, the "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky is so angry, would like to be told plainly and clearly: Do you approve of the "method of fighting and building" that is definitely expressed in the above-quoted appraisal of a definite political campaign? Yes or no? If you do, then you are pursuing a Liberal-Labour policy, betraying Marxism and the Party; and to talk of "peace" or of "unity" with *such* a policy, with groups which pursue *such* a policy, means deceiving yourself and others.

If not, then say so plainly. Phrases will not astonish, will not satisfy and will not intimidate the present-day workers.

Incidentally, the policy advocated by the Liquidators in the above-quoted passage is a foolish one even from the Liberal point of view, for the passage of a Bill in the Duma depends on "Zemstvo-Octobrists" of the type of Bennigsen, who showed his cards in committee.

* * *

The old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia know Trotsky very well and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore nec*essary to discuss him, for he is typical of all the five coteries abroad,* which, in fact, are also vacillating between the Liquidators and the Party.

In the period of the old *Iskra* (1901-03), these waverers, who flitted from the "Economists" to the "*Iskra*-ites" and back again were dubbed "Tushino rovers" (the name given in the Turbulent Times in ancient Rūs to soldiers who roamed from one camp to another).

When we discuss Liquidatorism we discuss a definite ideological trend which grew up in the course of many years, the roots of which are interlaced with those of "Menshevism" and "Economism" in the twenty years' history of Marxism, and which is connected with the policy and ideology *of a definite class, the Liberal bourgeoisie.*

The only ground the "Tushino rovers" *have for claiming that they stand* above factions is that they "borrow" their ideas from one faction one day and from another faction another day. Trotsky was an ardent "*Iskra*-ite" in 1901-03, and Ryazanov described his role at the Congress of 1903 as "Lenin's cudgel." At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik,

i.e., he deserted from the *Iskra*-ites to the "Economists." He said that there was "a gulf between the old and the new *Iskra*." In 1904-05, he deserted the Mensheviks and began to oscillate, co-operating with Martynov (the "Economist") at one moment and proclaiming his incongruously Left "permanent revolution" theory the next. In 1906-07, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

In the period of disintegration, after long "non-factional" vacillation, he again went to the Right, and in August 1912, he entered into a *bloc* with the Liquidators. Now he has deserted them again, although, *in substance*, he reiterates their paltry ideas.

Such types are characteristic as the survivals of past historical formations, of the time when the mass working-class movement in Russia was still in a state of torpor, and when every coterie had "sufficient scope" in which to pose as a trend, group or faction, in short, as a "power," negotiating amalgamation with others.

The younger generation of workers must know thoroughly whom they are dealing with when people come before them making incredibly pretentious claims, but absolutely refusing to reckon with *either* the Party decisions which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards Liquidatorism, *or* with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia which has actually brought about the *unity* of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions.

Published in *Prosveshcheniye* No. 5,
May 1914

IN MEMORY OF HERTZEN

On the occasion of the centenary of Hertzen's birth, the whole of liberal Russia is paying homage to him, carefully evading, however, the serious questions of Socialism, and taking pains to conceal that which distinguished Hertzen the *revolutionary* from a liberal. Even the conservative press is commemorating the Hertzen anniversary, mendaciously asserting that in his last years Hertzen renounced revolution. And, abroad, phrasemongering reigns supreme in the orations on Hertzen by the liberals and Narodniks.

The working-class party should remember Hertzen—not by indulging in philistine encomiums, but for the purpose of making clear its own tasks and ascertaining the proper place held in history by this writer who played an enormous role in paving the way for the Russian revolution.

Hertzen belonged to the generation of revolutionary nobles and landlords of the first half of the past century. The nobility gave Russia the Birons* and Arakcheyevs,** innumerable "drunkard officers, bullies, gamblers, heroes of fairs, whips, roisterers, floggers, pimps," as well as amiable Manilovs.*** "But," wrote Hertzen, "among them developed the men of December 14,**** a phalanx of heroes reared, like Romulus and Remus, on the milk of a wild beast.... They were titans, hammered out of pure steel from head to foot, warrior martyrs who knowingly went to certain death in order to awaken the young generation to a new life and to purify the children born in an environment of tyranny and servility."

Hertzen was one of those children. The uprising of the Decembrists awakened and "purified" him. In feudal Russia of the forties of the nineteenth century he rose to a height which made him the equal of the greatest thinkers of his time. He assimilated Hegel's dialectics. He realized that it was

* Biron E. I. (1690-1772)—favourite of the Russian Empress Anna Ioanovna, directed the reactionary terroristic regime in Russia during her reign (1730-1740). —*Ed.*

** Arakcheyev (1769-1834)—Count, reactionary statesman of tsarist Russia at the end of the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century, responsible for a long period of police despotism and brute force practised by the military clique.—*Ed.*

*** Manilov—*cf.*, note on p. 294.—*Ed.*

**** The men of December 14, or Decembrists—Russian noblemen revolutionaries who in December 1825 rose in the first open armed rebellion against tsarist autocracy.—*Ed.*

"the algebra of revolution." He went further than Hegel, following Feuerbach to materialism. The first of his *Letters on the Study of Nature*, "Empiricism and Idealism," written in 1844, shows us a thinker who even now stands head and shoulders above the host of modern empiricist natural scientists and the swarms of present-day idealist and semi-idealist philosophers. Hertzen came close to dialectical materialism, and halted—before historical materialism.

It was this "halt" that caused Hertzen's spiritual shipwreck after the defeat of the revolution of 1848. At that time Hertzen had left Russia and watched the revolution at close range. He was a democrat at the time, a revolutionary, a Socialist. But his "socialism" was one of the numerous brands and varieties of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Socialism characteristic of the epoch of 1848, which were dealt their deathblow in the June days* of that year. In point of fact, this was not Socialism at all, but merely sentimental phrases, benign visions, in which was embodied the *then* revolutionary spirit of the bourgeois democracy, as well as of the proletariat which had not yet cast off its influence.

Hertzen's spiritual shipwreck, the profound scepticism and pessimism to which he fell prey after 1848, was the shipwreck of the *bourgeois illusions* of Socialism. Hertzen's spiritual drama was a product and reflection of that epoch in world history when the revolutionism of the bourgeois democracy was *already* passing away (in Europe), and the revolutionism of the Socialist proletariat had *not yet* ripened. This is something the Russian liberal knights of verbal incontinence, who are now trying to cover up their own counter-revolutionism by florid phrases about Hertzen's scepticism, have not understood and cannot understand. With these knights, who betrayed the Russian revolution of 1905, and have even forgotten to think of the great calling of a *revolutionary*, scepticism is a form of transition from democracy to liberalism—to that servile, vile, infamous and brutal liberalism which shot down the workers in 1848, restored shattered thrones, applauded Napoleon III and which Hertzen *cursed*, being unable to understand its class nature.

With Hertzen scepticism was a form of transition from the illusions of "above-class" bourgeois democratism to the stern, inexorable and invincible class struggle of the proletariat. This is testified to by the "Letters to an Old Comrade," to Bakunin, written by Hertzen in 1869, a year before his death. In these letters Hertzen breaks with the anarchist Bakunin. True enough, Hertzen still sees in this break nothing more than a disagreement on tactics; he does not see the gulf between the world outlook of the proletarian who is confident of the victory of his class and that of the petty bourgeois who has despaired of his salvation. True enough, in these letters Hertzen again repeats the old bourgeois-democratic phrases to the effect

* Reference is to the insurrection of the Paris proletariat in June 1848, brutally crushed by the French bourgeoisie.—*Ed.*

that Socialism must preach "a sermon addressed equally to workman and master, to farmer and burgher." Nevertheless, in breaking with Bakunin, Hertzen was turning his gaze not to liberalism but to the *International*—to the International led by Marx, to the International which had begun to "*rally the legions*" of the proletariat, to unite "*the world of labour*" "which is abandoning the world of those who enjoy without working."

* * *

Failing as he did to understand the bourgeois-democratic essence of the entire movement of 1848 and of all the forms of pre-Marxian Socialism, Hertzen was *still less able to understand the* bourgeois nature of the Russian revolution. Hertzen—the founder of "Russian" Socialism, of "Narodism"—saw "Socialism" in the emancipation of the peasants *with land*, in community landownership and in the peasant idea of "the right to the land." His pet ideas on this subject he set forth an untold number of times.

Actually, there is *not a grain* of Socialism in this doctrine propounded by Hertzen, just as there is none of it in the whole of Russian Narodism, right down to the faded Narodism of the present-day "Socialist-Revolutionaries." Like the various forms of "the Socialism of 1848" in the West, this is the same sort of sentimental phrases, the same sort of benign visions, embodying the *revolutionism* of the bourgeois peasant democracy in Russia. The greater the amount of land the peasants would have received in 1861 and the cheaper the price they would have had to pay for it, the more strongly would the power of the feudal landlords have been undermined and the more rapidly, fully and widely would capitalism have developed in Russia. The idea of "the right to the land" and of "equal distribution of the land" represents but the formulated revolutionary aspirations to achieve equality cherished by the peasants fighting for the complete overthrow of the power of the landlords, for the complete abolition of landlordism.

This was fully proved by the revolution of 1905. On the one hand, the proletariat which created the Social-Democratic Labour Party, marched quite independently at the head of the revolutionary struggle; on the other hand, the revolutionary peasants (the "Trudoviks" and the "Peasant League") who fought for every form of the abolition of landlordism, going as far as demanding "the abolition of private property in land," fought precisely as proprietors, as small entrepreneurs.

In our day, the verbal controversy over the "Socialist nature" of the right to land, etc., serves only to *obscure* and gloss over the really important and vital historical question regarding the different *interests* of the liberal bourgeoisie and the revolutionary peasantry in the Russian *bourgeois* revolution; in other words, regarding the liberal and the democratic, the "compromising" (monarchist) and the republican tendency manifested

in this revolution. This is exactly the question which Hertzen's *Kolokol* (*The Tocsin*) posed, if we look beyond the words and get down to the essentials, if we investigate the class struggle as the basis of "theories" and doctrines and not vice versa.

Hertzen created a free Russian press abroad—that was the great service which he rendered. The *Polyarnaya Zvezda* (*The Northern Star*) carried on the tradition of the Decembrists. The *Kolokol* (1857-67) stalwartly championed the emancipation of the peasants. The slavish silence was broken.

But Hertzen had a landlord, aristocratic background. When he left Russia in 1847 he had not seen the revolutionary people and could have no faith in it. Hence, his liberal appeal to the "upper ranks." Hence, his numerous sugary letters in the *Kolokol* addressed to Alexander II the Hangman, which cannot be read nowadays without a feeling of disgust. Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, and Serno-Solovyovich, who represented the new generation of revolutionary commoners, were a thousand times right when they reproached Hertzen for these lapses from democratism *to* liberalism. However, it must be said in fairness to Hertzen that, much as he vacillated between democratism and liberalism, the democrat in him as a rule gained the upper hand.

When Kavelin, one of the most repulsive types representative of liberal obsequiousness—who at one time was enthusiastic about the *Kolokol* for the very reason that it manifested *liberal* tendencies—came out against a Constitution, attacked revolutionary agitation, condemned "violence" and appeals to it, and began to preach tolerance, Hertzen *broke* with this liberal sage. Hertzen turned upon his "meagre, absurd, harmful pamphlet" written "for the private guidance of the Government in its liberal pretense," denounced Kavelin's "sentimental political maxims" which represented "the Russian people as cattle and the government as the embodiment of wisdom." The *Kolokol* printed an article entitled "Epitaph," which lashed out against "professors weaving the rotten cobweb of their supercilious and paltry ideas, ex-professors, once unsophisticated and subsequently embittered because the healthy youth cannot sympathize with their scrofulous thoughts." Kavelin at once recognized himself in this portrait.

When Chernyshevsky was arrested, Kavelin, that infamous liberal, wrote: "I do not see anything reprehensible in the arrests... the revolutionary party considers all means proper for the purpose of overthrowing the government, and the latter is defending itself by its own means." As if in retort to this Cadet, Hertzen wrote in his article dealing with Chernyshevsky's trial: "And here are wretches, people comparable to grass under our feet, slimy creatures, who say that we must not denounce the gang of robbers and scoundrels who are governing us."

When the liberal Turgenev wrote a private letter to Alexander II assuring him of his loyalty and made a donation of two goldpieces for the soldiers wounded during the suppression of the Polish insurrection, the *Kolo-*

kol wrote of "the grey-haired Magdalen (of the masculine gender) who wrote to the Tsar to tell him that she knew no sleep because she was tormented by the thought that the Tsar was not aware of the repentance that had befallen her." And Turgenev at once recognized himself.

When the whole crowd of Russian liberals scurried away from Hertzen for his defence of Poland, when the whole of "educated society" turned its back on the *Kolokol,* Hertzen was not dismayed. He went on championing the freedom of Poland and castigating the suppressors, the butchers, the hangmen in the service of Alexander II. Hertzen saved the honour of Russian democracy. "We have saved the honour of the Russian name," he wrote to Turgenev, "and that is why we have suffered at the hands of the slavish majority."

In commenting on a report concerning a serf peasant who killed a landlord for an attempt to rape his betrothed, Hertzen exclaimed in the *Kolokol:* "Well done!" When it was reported that army officers would be appointed to superintend the "peaceable" progress of "emancipation," Hertzen wrote: "The first wise colonel who, with his troops, instead of crushing the peasants, will take their side, is sure to ascend the throne of the Romanovs." When Colonel Reitern shot himself in Warsaw (1860) because he did not want to render aid to the hangmen, Hertzen wrote: "If any shooting is to be done, it is the generals who give orders to fire upon unarmed people that should be shot." When fifty peasants were killed in Bezdna, and their leader Anton Petrov was executed (April 12, 1861), Hertzen wrote in the *Kolokol:*

> "Oh, if only my words could reach you, toiler and sufferer of the Russian land! ... I would teach you to despise your spiritual shepherds, placed over you by the St. Petersburg Synod and a German tsar.... You hate the landlord, you hate the official, you fear them—and rightly so; but you still believe in the tsar and the bishop ... do not believe them. The tsar is with them and they are with the tsar. It is him you now see—you, the father of the youth murdered in Bezdna, and you, the son of a father murdered in Penza.... Your shepherds are as ignorant as you are and as poor as you.... Such was the monk Anthony (not Bishop Anthony, but Anton of Bezdna) who suffered for you in Kazan.... The corpses of your saints will not perform forty-eight miracles, and praying to them will not cure a toothache; but their living memory may produce one miracle—your emancipation."

It is therefore obvious how infamously and vilely Hertzen is slandered by our liberals entrenched in the slavish "legal" press, who extol the weak points in Hertzen and keep silent about his strong points. It is not Hertzen's fault, but his misfortune, that he could not see the revolutionary people in Russia itself in the 1840's. When he did behold the revolutionary people in the *'sixties* he fearlessly took the side of the revolutionary democ-

racy against liberalism. He fought for a victory of the people over tsardom, not for a deal between the liberal bourgeoisie and the landlords' tsar. He raised aloft the banner of revolution.

* * *

In commemorating the Hertzen centenary we clearly see the three generations and the three classes that were active in the Russian revolution. At first—nobles and landlords, the Decembrists and Hertzen. The circle of these revolutionaries was a narrow one. They were frightfully removed from the people. But their work was not in vain. The Decembrists awakened Hertzen. Hertzen launched revolutionary agitation.

This agitation was taken up, extended, reinforced, and tempered by the revolutionary commoners, beginning with Chernyshevsky and ending with the heroes of the "Narodnaya Volya." The circle of fighters widened, their contacts with the people became closer. "The young helmsmen of the impending storm," Hertzen said of them. But as yet it was not the storm itself.

The storm is the movement of the masses themselves. The proletariat, the only class that is revolutionary to the end, rose at the head of the masses and aroused millions of peasants to open revolutionary struggle. The first onslaught took place in 1905. The next storm is gathering before our very eyes.

In commemorating Hertzen, the proletariat is learning from his example to appreciate the great importance of revolutionary theory. It is learning that selfless devotion to the revolution and the work of revolutionary propaganda among the people are not wasted even if long decades divide the sowing from the harvest. It is learning properly to see the role of the various classes in the Russian and in the international revolution. Enriched by these lessons, the proletariat will fight its way through to a free union with the Socialist workers of all lands. It will crush that vile thing, the tsarist monarchy, against which Hertzen was the first to raise the great banner of struggle by addressing his *free Russian words* to the masses.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 26,
May 8 [April 25], 1912

POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUSSIA

The elections to the State Duma are compelling all the parties to intensify their agitation and rally their forces, each party endeavouring to elect the greatest possible number of "its own" deputies.

In Russia, like in all other countries, these preparations for the elections are attended by the most brazen self-advertisement. All the bourgeois parties, that is to say, those that uphold the economic privileges of the capitalists, are advertising themselves in the same way as individual capitalists advertise their wares. Take a look at the commercial advertisements in any newspaper: you will see that the capitalists invent the most "striking," the loudest and most fashionable names for their merchandise, which they praise in the most unrestrained terms, and that absolutely nothing is too preposterous for them.

The public—at any rate in the big cities and trade centres—have long since become inured to commercial advertisements and know their worth. Unfortunately, political self-advertisement misleads an incomparably greater number of people, it is much more difficult to expose it, and its deception is much more tenacious. The names of parties, both in Europe and in Russia, are often chosen purely for purposes of advertisement, the "programs" of parties are more often than not written with the sole purpose of defrauding the public. The greater the amount of political freedom in a capitalist country, the more democracy there is, *i.e.*, the greater the power of the people and of the popular representatives, the more brazen-faced, as a rule, is the self-advertisement of parties.

Such being the case, how is the public to find its bearings in the fight among the various parties? Does not this fight with the fraud and publicity attending it, signify that representative institutions, parliaments, assemblies of popular representatives, are worthless and even harmful on general principles—as the savage reactionaries, the enemies of parliamentarism, are trying to make out? No. In the absence of representative institutions, there is *even much more* of deception, political mendacity and all sorts of fraudulent tricks; only the people dispose of fewer means of exposing the deception, of ascertaining the truth.

In order to find one's bearings in the fight among parties, one must not take words at their face value, but study the real history of the parties—

study not so much what they say about themselves, but their *deeds*, how they go about solving various political problems, how they *behave* in dealing with matters involving the vital interests of the various classes of society: landlords, capitalists, peasants, workers, etc.

The greater the amount of political freedom in a country, and the more stable and democratic its representative institutions, the easier is it for the masses of the people to find their bearings in the inter-party fight and to *learn politics, i.e.*, to see through the lies and to ascertain the truth.

The division of any society into different political parties becomes most pronounced in times of profound crises which shake the entire country. At such times governments are compelled to look for support among the various classes of society; the serious struggle casts aside all the empty phrase-mongering, all the superficial and extraneous matter; the parties bend all their efforts and direct their appeal to the *masses* of the people, and the masses, guided by their unerring instinct, enlightened by the experience of the open struggle, follow those parties which represent the interests of their particular class.

The epochs of such crises, as a rule, determine the party alignment of the social forces of the given country for many years and even for decades ahead. In Germany, for instance, such crises were the wars of 1866 and 1870; in Russia such a crisis was the events of 1905. If we are to understand the essence of our political parties, if we are to be clear as to which *classes* the various parties represent in Russia, we must go back to the events of that year.

We shall begin our brief sketch of the political parties in Russia with the parties of the extreme Right.

On the extreme right flank we find the League of the Russian Nation. The program of this party is set forth in the following passage from the *Russkoye Znamya (The Russian Banner)*, the paper of the League of the Russian Nation, published by A. I. Dubrovin:

> "The League of the Russian Nation, which on June 3, 1907, was accorded the honour of being called upon from the height of the Tsar's throne to be its reliable mainstay, and to serve as an example of law and order to all and in everything, professes that the will of the Tsar can be exercised only on condition: 1) of the full manifestation of the Tsar's absolute power, which is indissolubly and vitally bound up with the Russian Orthodox Church, canonically established; 2) of the domination of the Russian nationality not only in the internal provinces, but also in the frontier regions; 3) of the existence of a State Duma, made up exclusively of Russian men, as main assistant of the Absolute Monarch in his labours to build up the state; 4) of the complete observance of the principles of the League of the Russian Nation in regard to the Jews; and 5) of the removal from govern-

ment service of all officials who are opponents of the Tsar's autocratic power."

We have copied this solemn declaration of the *Rights* word for word, on the one hand, in order to acquaint the reader with the original itself, and, on the other, because the fundamental motives set forth in it are representative of the motives of all the parties of the majority in the Third Duma, *i.e.*, of the "Nationalists" and Octobrists as well. This will be brought out in the further exposition.

To all intents and purposes, the program of the League of the Russian Nation repeats the old slogan of the days of serfdom, *viz.:* Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality. In regard to the question on which the League of the Russian Nation is generally considered as differing from the other parties in the Right camp—namely, recognition or repudiation of "constitutional" principles in the Russian state systems—it is particularly important to note that the League of the Russian Nation is by *no means* opposed to representative institutions on general principles. It is evident from the program copied above that the League of the Russian Nation is in favour of the existence of a State Duma playing the part of "assistant."

Moreover, the specific nature of the Russian Constitution—if we may call it that—is correctly stated by the Dubrovinite, *i.e.*, his statement accords with the actual state of affairs. This is the stand taken by the Nationalists and Octobrists, too, in their practical politics. The controversy between these parties over the "Constitution" is largely a fight over words: The Rights are not opposed to a Duma, only they are especially eager to emphasize that it must be an "assistant," while in no way defining its rights. Nor do the Nationalists and the Octobrists, for their part, insist on any strictly defined right; in fact, the question of real guarantees of rights is furthest from their minds. The "Constitutionalists" of the Octobrist camp are fully at one with the "opponents of Constitution" in their support of the Constitution of June 3.

The program of the Black-Hundreds is plain, clear and outspoken on the point of baiting non-Russians in general and Jews in particular. As is generally the case, they speak out more rudely, brazenly and ebulliently, saying aloud what the other Government parties are more or less "bashfully" or diplomatically keeping to themselves.

In actual fact, the Nationalists and the Octobrists—as is well known to everyone who is to any extent familiar with their activity in the Third Duma, or with their press organs, like the *Novoye Vremya*, *Svyet* (*Light*), *Golos Moskvy* (*The Voice of Moscow*)—have a hand in the baiting of non-Russians.

The question is: What is the social basis of the Right parties? What class do they represent? What class do they serve?

Their reversion to the slogans of serfdom, their upholding of all that is old, of all that is mediaeval in Russian life, their complete satisfaction

with the Constitution of June 3—the *landlords'* Constitution—and their defence of the privileges of the nobility and the bureaucracy—all this provides a clear answer to our question. The Rights are the party of the feudal landlords, of the Council of the United Nobility. Not for nothing did that very Council play such a prominent—nay, a leading—role in the dispersal of the Second Duma, the change of the electoral law and the *coup d'état* of June 3.

To get an idea of the economic strength of this class in Russia we need but mention the following fundamental fact, proved by the data of the *government* statistics of landownership in 1905, statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior.

Less than 30,000 landlords in European Russia own 70,000,000 dessiatins of land. *A similar* amount of land is owned by 10,000,000 peasant households with the smallest allotments. Thus we have an average of about 2,300 dessiatins per big landlord, and, in the case of the poor peasants, an average of 7 dessiatins of land—per family, per household.

It is quite natural and inevitable that on such an "allotment" the peasant cannot live; all he can do is die by slow stages. The recurring spells of famine affecting millions, like this year's famine, continue to play havoc with the husbandry of the peasants in Russia following each crop failure. The peasants are obliged to rent land from the landlords paying for it in various forms of *labour*. In exchange for the land, the peasant works for the landlord with his horse and his implements. This is the same corvée, only it is not officially called serfdom. With 2,300 dessiatins of land, on an average, at their disposal the landlords, in most cases, run their estates only by keeping the peasants in bondage, by the system of labour rent, that is to say, the corvée system. They cultivate only part of their huge estates with the help of hired labourers.

Further, that same class of the landed nobility supplies the state with the overwhelming majority of all higher and intermediate officials. The privileges of the officialdom in Russia represent another side of the privileges and agrarian power of the landed nobility. It is therefore obvious that the Council of the United Nobility and the "Right" parties are upholding the policy of the old feudal traditions not as a matter of accident, but as a matter of inevitability, not because of the "ill will" of individuals, but under pressure of the *interests* of a tremendously powerful *class*. The old ruling class, the survivals of landlordism, remaining the ruling class as heretofore, has created for itself a party after its own fashion—the "League of the Russian Nation" or the "Rights" in the State Duma and in the Council of the Empire.

But, since there exist representative institutions, and since the *masses* have already come out openly in the political arena, as they did in Russia in 1905, each party is bound, within certain limits, to appeal to the populace. Now, in the name of what can the Right parties appeal to the people?

Of course, they cannot speak openly of defending the interests of the landlords. That is why they speak of preserving the old traditions in general, that is why they spare no efforts to foment distrust toward non-Russians, particularly toward Jews, to incite the utterly ignorant and the utterly benighted to pogroms, to Jew-baiting. The propaganda for maintaining the privileges of the nobility, the officials and the landlords is disguised with talk about the "oppression" of Russians by aliens.

Such is the "Right" party. One of its members, Purishkevich, most prominent spokesman of the Rights in the Third Duma, has worked a lot, and successfully, to *show* the people *what* the Rights want, *how* they act, *whom* they serve. Purishkevich is a gifted agitator in this respect.

Next to the Rights, who have forty-six seats in the Third Duma, are the "*Nationalists*" with ninety-one seats. There is hardly a shade of difference between them and the Rights. In fact these are not two parties, but two sections of one party which have divided between themselves the "labour" of baiting non-Russians, "Cadets" (liberals), democrats, etc. The ones are acting more rudely, the others are a bit more refined, but both are *doing* the same thing. Indeed, it is to the government's *advantage* not to be fully identified with the "extreme" Rights who are capable of perpetrating every sort of scandal, pogrom, the murder of people like Hertzenstein, Yollos, Karavayev, to make it appear that *they* are "criticizing" the government from the right.... No real significance can be attached to the distinction between the Rights and the Nationalists.

The *Octobrists* in the Third Duma are one hundred and thirty-one strong, including, of course, the "Right Octobrists." There is nothing essentially different in the present policy of the Octobrists distinguishing them from the Rights, the difference between them consisting in the fact that, in addition to the landlords, the Octobrist Party serves also the interests of the big capitalists, the conservative merchants, the bourgeoisie which has taken such fright at the awakening of the workers, and then of the peasants, to independent political life, that it turned heart and soul to the defence of the old ways. There are capitalists in Russia—and quite a number of them, too—whose treatment of the workers is not a whit better than the treatment of the serfs of old at the hands of the landlords; they look upon workers and clerks as their menials, as servants. Nobody is better fitted to defend these old ways than the "Right" parties, the Nationalists and the Octobrists. There is also the brand of capitalists who at the Zemstvo and municipal congresses in 1904 and 1905 demanded a "Constitution," but in their *hostility* to the workers are fully willing to be content with the Constitution of June 3.

The Octobrist Party is the principal counter-revolutionary party of the landlords and capitalists. It is the leading party of the Third Duma: the 131 Octobrists with the 137 Rights and Nationalists constitute a solid majority in the Third Duma.

The electoral law of June 3, 1907 *guarantees* the landlords and the big

capitalists a majority: the landlords and the electors of the first urban curia (*i.e.*, the big capitalists) have a safe majority in *all* the provincial assemblies electing deputies to the Duma. In 28 provinces the landowners alone have a majority in the provincial electoral assemblies. The entire policy of the Third-of-June Government has been carried out with the assistance of the Octobrist Party, and this party bears the responsibility for all the sins and crimes committed by the Third Duma.

In words, in their program, the Octobrists uphold a "Constitution" and even—liberties! Actually, this party supported all the measures taken against the workers (the insurance bill, for one thing—recall the conduct of the *Chairman* of the Duma Committee on Labour, Baron Tiesenhausen!), against the peasants, and against any restriction of tyranny and persecution. The Octobrists are as much a Government party as the Nationalists. The position is not the least bit altered by the fact that once in a while—particularly on the eve of elections!—the Octobrists make "oppositionary" speeches. In all countries, wherever parliaments exist, it has been observed from time immemorial that the bourgeois parties indulge in this sort of *playing at opposition*—a harmless game as far as they are concerned, because no government takes it seriously; a game which they consider it useful to play on occasions for the benefit of the voters whom it is necessary to "grease" by a show of opposition.

However, the greatest expert, the virtuoso, at the game of opposition is the principal opposition party of the Third Duma—the Cadets, *Constitutional-"Democrats,"* the "People's Freedom Party."

The very name of the party is part of the game; for it is *in no wise* a democratic party, and by *no manner of means* a people's party; it is a party, not of freedom, but of half-freedom or, rather, of quarter-freedom.

In actual fact, it is the party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which dreads the popular movement far more than reaction.

The democrat has faith in the people, faith in the movement of the masses, and he renders this movement every assistance, although entertaining at times (such are the bourgeois democrats, the Trudoviks) wrong ideas about the significance of this movement within the framework of the capitalist system. The democrat sincerely strives to put an end to *all* the survivals of mediaevalism.

The liberal fears the movement of the masses; he tries to impede it, and *deliberately* defends certain institutions of mediaevalism—in fact, the most important of them—as a bulwark against the masses, particularly against the workers. The aspiration of the liberals is by no means to destroy all the foundations of the power of the Purishkeviches, but to share power with them. The democratic petty bourgeois (such as the peasant and the Trudovik) says: Everything for the people and through the people. He sincerely strives to uproot all the foundations of Purishkevichism, without, however, realizing the meaning of the struggle of the wage workers against capital. The real aim of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, on the other

hand, is to share power with Purishkevich and rule with him *over* the workers and *over* the small proprietors.

In the First and the Second Dumas the Cadets had a majority or occupied a leading position. They used their position for a senseless and inglorious *game:* When facing the right they played at loyalty and at being of ministerial timber (we, they said in effect, are able to solve all the contradictions by peaceable means, in such a way as not to spoil the muzhik and not to harm Purishkevich); when facing the left they played at democratism. In the end the Cadets, as a result of this game, got kicks from the right. On the left they quite deservedly earned the name of traitors to the cause of the people's freedom. In the First and the Second Dumas they fought all the time, not only against the working-class democracy, but also against the Trudoviks. We need but recall the fact that the Cadets *helped defeat* the plan proposed by the Trudoviks for the setting up of local land committees (in the First Duma), a plan based on the most elementary requirements of democracy, on the very ABC of democracy. The Cadets thus upheld the *predominance* of the landlords and officials *over* the peasants in the land-regulating commissions!

In the Third Duma the Cadets have played at a "responsible Opposition," an opposition with the possessive case.* As such, they voted time and again for the Government Budgets (some "democrats"!), explained to the Octobrists that there was nothing dangerous or reprehensible in their plan of "compulsory" redemption (compulsory for the peasants)—recall the speech of Berezovsky the First; they commissioned Karaulov to deliver "pious" speeches from the rostrum of the Duma, renounced the movement of the masses, addressed their appeals to the "upper crust," and *obstructed* the efforts of the lower ranks (the Cadet's fight *against* the workers' deputies on the question of workers' insurance), and so on and so forth.

The Cadets are the party of counter-revolutionary liberalism. By their claim to the role of a "responsible Opposition," that is to say, a recognized, lawful opposition *permitted* to compete with the Octobrists, an opposition not to the regime established on June 3, but of that regime—the Cadets have definitely crossed themselves off from the rolls as "democrats." The shameless *Vekha*-ite preachment of the Cadet ideologists, such as Messrs. Struve, Izgoyev and Co., who earned the ardent kisses of Rozanov and Anthony, Bishop of Volhynia, and the role of the Cadet Party as "responsible Opposition" in the Third Duma, are two sides of the same medal. The liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, tolerated by the Purishkeviches, is trying to get a seat next to Purishkevich.

The bloc formed by the Cadets with the "Progressives" at present, for the elections to the Fourth Duma, has provided additional proof of the

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* An opposition with the possessive case—the Opposition of His Majesty, see note on p. 476.—*Ed.*

profoundly counter-revolutionary nature of the Cadets. The Progressives have no claims whatever to being democrats, they have not a word to say about fighting the entire Third-of-June regime, and they have never harboured the idea of "universal suffrage" even in their dreams. They are moderate liberals who do not make a secret of their kinship with the Octobrists. The alliance between the Cadets and the Progressives must open the eyes of even the blindest "yes-men of the Cadets" to the real essence of that party.

The *democratic bourgeoisie* of Russia is represented by the Narodniks of all shades, from the most leftist among the Socialist-Revolutionaries to the Popular Socialists and Trudoviks. They all readily bandy "Socialist" phrases, but it would be impermissible for a class-conscious worker to be deceived as to the real meaning of these phrases. Actually, there is *not a grain* of Socialism in any "right to the land," or in any "equal distribution" of the land, or in the "socialization of the land." This is something that should be clear to everyone who knows that the abolition of private property in land and a new, even the "fairest possible," distribution of the land, far from infringing on commodity production and the domination of the market, money and capital, contributes to their even wider development.

However, the phrases about "the principle of labour" and "Popular Socialism" express the democrat's profound faith in the possibility and indispensability of doing away with *all* the survivals of mediaevalism in agriculture and, at the same time, in the political system (and his sincere striving for this). Whereas the liberals (the Cadets) strive to share political power and political privileges with the Purishkeviches, the Narodniks are democrats for the reason that they are striving, and must strive, at present to abolish *all* the privileges of landed property and *all* privileges in politics.

Such is the position of the great bulk of the Russian peasantry that it cannot even entertain the thought of any compromise with the Purishkeviches (something entirely possible, accessible and *dear to the heart* of the liberals). That is why the democratism of the petty bourgeoisie is sure to have mass roots in Russia for quite a long time to come, whereas Stolypin's agrarian reform, that expression of the Purishkeviches' bourgeois policy against the muzhik, has so far produced nothing durable, save the —starvation of thirty million peasants!

The millions of starving small proprietors cannot help striving for a *different* kind of agrarian reform, a democratic agrarian reform, which cannot transcend the bounds of capitalism or abolish wage-slavery, but *can* sweep the survivals of *mediaevalism* from the face of the Russian land.

The Trudoviks are an extremely small group in the Third Duma, but they represent the *masses*. The vacillation of the Trudoviks between the

Cadets and the working-class democracy is the inevitable result of the class position of the small proprietors, and the special difficulties attending the job of rallying, organizing and enlightening these small proprietors are at the root of the extreme indefiniteness and amorphousness of the Trudoviks as a party. That is why the Trudoviks, with the aid of the stupid "Otzovism" of the Left Narodniks, present the sad picture of a liquidated party.

The difference between the Trudoviks and our own near-Marxist Liquidators is that the former are Liquidators because of their weakness, whereas the latter are Liquidators with malice aforethought. The task of the working-class democrats is to help the weak petty-bourgeois democrats, wrest them from the influence of the liberals, rally the democratic camp against the counter-revolutionary Constitutional-Democrats, and not only against the Rights.

As regards the working-class democracy, which had its group in the Third Duma, we can say here but little.

Everywhere in Europe the parties of the working class took shape in the process of casting off the influence of the general democratic ideology, while learning to distinguish between the struggle of the wage workers against capital and the struggle against feudalism—doing this, among other things, for the sake of lending strength to the latter struggle, for the sake of ridding it of any wavering and timidity. In Russia the working-class democracy drew a distinct line between itself and both the liberals and the bourgeois democrats (the Trudoviks), thus contributing enormously to the cause of the democracy as a whole.

The Liquidatorist trend among the working-class democrats (*Nasha Zarya* and *Zhivoye Dyelo*) shares the weakness of the Trudovik trend, glorifies amorphousness, longs for the status of a "tolerated" opposition, repudiates the hegemony of the workers, confines itself to *words* about an "open" organization (while heaping abuse on the organization which does not function openly), advocates a liberal labour policy. The connection between this trend and the dispersion and spirit of decadence characteristic of the period of counter-revolution is obvious; and it is clear that this trend is dropping away from the working-class democracy.

The class-conscious workers are liquidating nothing, but are rallying their ranks in opposition to the liberal influences, organizing as a class, developing all forms of trade union and other unity, and coming forward both in the capacity of representatives of *wage* labour against capital and as representatives of consistent democracy against the entire old regime in Russia and against any concessions to that regime.

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By way of illustration, we give below the figures relating to the strength of the various parties in the Third Duma, which we take from the official Duma *Handbook* for 1912.

PARTIES IN THE THIRD DUMA

Landlords	
Rights	46
Nationalists	74
Independent Nationalists	17
Right Octobrists	11
Octobrists	120
Total Government parties	*268*
The Bourgeoisie	
Progressives	36
Cadets	52
The Polish Kolo	11
Polish-Lithuanian-Byelorussian Group	7
Moslem Group	9
Total Liberals	*115*
Bourgeois Democrats	
The Trudovik Group	14
Working-Class Democrats	
Social-Democrats	13
Total Democrats	*27*
Non-Partisans	27
Grand total	*437*

Thus there were two majorities in the Third Duma: 1) the Rights and the Octobrists=268 out of 437; 2) The Octobrists and Liberals=120+115=235 out of 437. Both majorities were counter-revolutionary.

Nevskaya Zvezda No. 5,
May 23 [10], 1912

THE REVOLUTIONARY RISE

The huge May Day strike of the proletariat of all Russia and the accompanying street demonstrations, revolutionary proclamations, and revolutionary speeches to gatherings of workers, have clearly shown that Russia has entered the phase of a rise in the revolution.

This rise has not come as a bolt from the blue. No, the way has been paved for it over a long period of time by all the conditions of Russian life, and the mass strikes in connection with the Lena shootings* and May Day only marked its definite arrival. The temporary triumph of the counter-revolution was attended by a decline in the mass struggle of the workers. The number of strikers gives, although only an approximate, yet an absolutely objective and precise idea of the extent of this struggle.

During the ten years preceding the revolution, from 1895 to 1904, the average number of strikers was 43,000 per annum (in round figures); in 1905—2,750,000, in 1906—1,000,000, in 1907—750,000. The three years of the revolution were marked by a rise in the strike movement of the proletariat *unparalleled anywhere in the world.* Its decline, which began in 1906 and 1907, became definite in 1908, when there were 175,000 strikers. The *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907, which restored the autocratic rule of the tsar in alliance with the Duma of the Black-Hundred landlords and commercial and industrial magnates, was the inevitable result of the flagging of the revolutionary energy of the masses.

The three years 1908-10 were the period of the high tide of the Black-Hundred counter-revolution, of liberal bourgeois renegacy and of proletarian despondency and disintegration. The number of strikers steadily dropped-reaching 60,000 in 1909 and 50,000 in 1910.

However, a marked change set in at the end of 1910. The demonstrations in connection with the death of Muromtsev the liberal and of Leo Tolstoy, and also the student movement, clearly indicated that a fresh breeze had begun to blow, that a change had taken place in the mood of the democratic masses. The year 1911 witnessed a gradual switching over on the part of the worker masses to an *offensive:* the number of strikers

* Reference is to the Lena gold field workers who struck work in protest against the ruthless exploitation by the mine owners and were shot down by the tsarist troops on April 4, 1912. The massacre called forth a wave of political mass strikes and workers' demonstations all over the country.—*Ed.*

rose to 100,000. Signs from various quarters indicate that the fatigue, the stupor generated by the triumph of the counter-revolution, is passing away, that once again *the tendency is* towards revolution. In summing up the situation, the All-Russian Conference held in January 1912 stated:

> "The commencement of a political revival is to be observed among wide sections of the democracy and, above all, among the proletariat. The workers' strikes in 1910-11, the beginning of demonstrations and proletarian mass-meetings, the beginning of a movement among the urban bourgeois democrats (student strikes), etc.—are all manifestations of the growing revolutionary sentiments among the masses against the Third-of-June regime." (See the "Announcement" of the Conference, p. 18.)*

By the second quarter of this year these sentiments had become so pronounced that they manifested themselves in actions on the part of the masses, and created a *revolutionary rise.* The course of events during the past year and a half shows with perfect clarity that there is nothing accidental in this rise, that its advent is quite natural, that it is an inevitability conditioned by the whole of Russia's previous development.

The Lena shootings served as the stimulus which transformed the revolutionary temper of the masses into a revolutionary revival of the masses. Nothing is more false than the liberal invention, which is repeated after the Liquidators by Trotsky and the Vienna *Pravda,* that "the struggle for the freedom of association is the *basis* of both the Lena tragedy and the powerful response it found in the country." Freedom of association was neither the specific nor the principal demand in the Lena strike. It was not the lack of the freedom of association that the Lena shootings revealed, but the lack of freedom—from provocation, the lack of rights in general, the lack of freedom from wholesale tyranny.

The Lena shootings, as we have already made clear in the *Sotsial-Demokrat,* No. 26, were an exact reflection of the *entire* regime of the Third-of-June monarchy. It was not the struggle for one of the *rights* of the proletariat—even though one of the cardinal, one of the most important rights—that was characteristic of the Lena events. What was characteristic of these events was the complete absence of elementary respect for law of *any* kind. The characteristic feature was that an *agent provocateur,* a spy, an *Okhrana* agent, a menial of the tsar, resorted to mass shootings without any political reason whatever. It is precisely this general tyranny in Russian life, it is precisely the hopelessness and impossibility of waging a struggle for particular *rights,* precisely this incorrigibility of the tsar's monarchy and of its entire regime, that stood out so clearly against the background of the Lena events that they *fired* the masses with *revolutionary* ardour.

* See "The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party," Lenin, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Vol. IV.—*Ed.*

The liberals have been straining every nerve to represent the Lena events and the May Day strikes as a trade union movement and a struggle for "rights." But, to everyone who is not blinded by the liberal (and Liquidatorist) controversies something different is obvious. What is obvious is the *revolutionary* character of the mass strike, especially emphasized by the St. Petersburg May Day proclamation, issued by various groups of Social-Democrats (and even by one group of Socialist-Revolutionary workers!), which we reprint in full in our news section, and which repeats the slogans advanced by the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in January 1912.

For that matter, it is not even the slogans so much that provide the main corroboration of the revolutionary character of the strikes in connection with the Lena events and May Day. The slogans *formulate* what the facts show. The mass strikes spreading from district to district, their enormous growth, the rapidity with which they spread, the boldness of the workers, the greater frequency of mass meetings and revolutionary speeches, the demand to cancel the fines imposed for celebrating May Day, the combination of the political and the economic strike, familiar to us from the time of the first Russian revolution—all these are obvious indications of the true character of the movement, namely, that it is *a revolutionary rise of the masses.*

Let us recall the experience of 1905. Events show that the *tradition* of the revolutionary mass strike is *alive* among the workers and that the workers at once took up and revived this tradition. The strike wave of 1905, unparalleled in the world, combining the political and economic strike, involved 810,000 strikers during the first, and 1,277,000 during the last quarter of the year. According to approximate estimates, the strikes in connection with the Lena events involved some 300,000 workers, the May Day strikes—400,000, and the strike movement still continues to grow. Every fresh issue of the newspapers—even of the liberal newspapers—brings news showing how the strike conflagration is spreading. The second quarter of 1912 is not quite over, yet even now we have definite indications of the fact that, as regards the magnitude of the strike movement, the beginning of the revolutionary rise in 1912 is not *lower but rather higher* than the corresponding beginning in 1905!

The Russian revolution was the first to develop on a large scale this proletarian method of agitation, of rousing and consolidating the masses and of drawing them into the struggle. Now the proletariat is applying this method once again and with an even firmer hand. No power on earth could achieve what the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat is achieving by this method. A huge country, with a population of 150,000,000 spread over a vast area, scattered, oppressed, deprived of all rights, ignorant, fenced off from "evil influences" by a swarm of authorities, police, spies—the *whole* of this country is beginning to get into a ferment. The most backward strata both of the workers and of the peasants are

coming into direct or indirect contact with the strikers. Hundreds of thousands of revolutionary agitators are at once appearing on the scene. Their influence is infinitely increased by the fact that they are indissolubly connected with the rank and file, with the masses, they remain in their ranks, fight for the most urgent needs of *every* worker's family, combine with this immediate struggle for the daily economic needs their political protest and struggle against the monarchy. For counter-revolution has roused in millions and tens of millions of people a bitter hatred for the monarchy, it has given them the rudiments of an understanding of the part played by it, and now the slogan of the advanced workers of the capital—*Long live the democratic republic!*—*is making constant headway, spreading* through thousands of channels, in the wake of every strike, reaching the backward strata, the remotest places, the "people," "the depths of Russia"!

Very characteristic is the dissertation on strikes by the liberal, Severyanin, which was welcomed by the *Russkiye Vyedomosti* and approvingly reprinted in the *Rech:*

> "Have the workers any grounds for adding economic or any [!] demands to a May Day strike?" asks Mr. Severyain; and he answers: "I make bold to think that they have none. Every economic strike can and must be begun only after a serious consideration of its chances of success.... That is why more often than not it is unreasonable to connect such strikes with May Day.... It would be even rather strange to do so: Here you are celebrating the international workers' holiday, and you take the occasion to demand a ten per cent raise on calico of such and such grades."

This is how the liberal reasons! And this piece of unexampled vulgarity, meanness and vileness is approvingly accepted by the "best" liberal papers which claim to be democratic!

The coarse greediness of a bourgeois, the vile cowardice of a counter-revolutionary—that is what is concealed behind the florid phrases of the liberal. He wants to safeguard the pockets of the employers. He wants an "orderly," "harmless" demonstration in favour of the "right of association"! But the proletariat, instead of this, is drawing the masses into a *revolutionary* strike, which indissolubly links up politics with economics, a strike which wins the support of the most backward strata by the success of the struggle for an immediate improvement in the workers' standard of life, and which, at the same time, rouses the people *against the tsarist monarchy.*

Yes, the experience of 1905 created a deep-rooted and great tradition of mass strikes. And it must not be forgotten to what these strikes in Russia lead. Stubborn mass strikes are indissolubly bound up in our country with *armed insurrection.*

Let these words not be misinterpreted. It is by no means a question of a *call* for an uprising. Such a call would be most unwise at this juncture.

It is a question of establishing the *connection* between strike movements and insurrection in Russia.

How did the uprising *grow* in 1905? In the first place, mass strikes, demonstrations and meetings caused clashes between the populace and the police and troops to become more frequent. Secondly, the mass strikes roused the peasantry to a number of partial, sporadic, semi-spontaneous uprisings. Thirdly, the mass strikes very rapidly spread to the army and navy, causing clashes on economic grounds (the "bean" and similar "mutinies") and, subsequently, insurrections. Fourthly, the counter-revolutionary forces *themselves* started civil war by pogroms, the beating up of democrats, etc.

The Revolution of 1905 resulted in defeat not because it went "too far," or because the December uprising was "artificial," as is the opinion of the renegades among the liberals, etc. On the contrary, the cause of the defeat was that the uprising did not go *far enough*, that the consciousness of its necessity was not sufficiently widespread and was not thoroughly assimilated by the revolutionary classes, that the uprising was not unanimous, determined, organized, simultaneous, aggressive.

Let us now see whether signs of a *gathering uprising* can be observed at the present time. In order not to be carried away by revolutionary enthusiasm, let us take the testimony of the *Octobrists*. The German Union of Octobrists in St. Petersburg consists mainly of so-called "Left" and "constitutional" Octobrists, who are particularly popular among the Cadets, and who are most capable (in comparison with the other Octobrists and Cadets) of observing events "objectively," without making it their aim to frighten the authorities with the prospect of revolution.

The *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, the organ of these Octobrists, wrote the following in its weekly political review of May 6 [19]:

> "May has come. Regardless of the weather, this is usually not a very pleasant month for the inhabitants of the capital, because it begins with the *proletarian 'holiday.'* This year, with the impression of the Lena demonstrations still fresh in the minds of the workers, May Day was particularly dangerous. The atmosphere of the capital, saturated with all sorts of rumours about strikes and demonstrations, portended a conflagration. Our trusty police were perceptibly agitated; they organized searches, arrested some persons and held in readiness large posses to prevent street demonstrations. The fact that the police found nothing more clever to do than to raid the editorial offices of the workers' papers and arrest their editors does not testify to a particularly profound understanding of the wires by which the puppet regiments of the workers are pulled. Yet such wires exist. This is borne out by the disciplined character of the strike and by many other circumstances. That is why this May Day strike, the biggest of all we have witnessed so far, is so ominous—some 100,000 or perhaps even 150,000 workers of big and small workshops struck. It was only a

coming into direct or indirect contact with the strikers. Hundreds of thousands of revolutionary agitators are at once appearing on the scene. Their influence is infinitely increased by the fact that they are indissolubly connected with the rank and file, with the masses, they remain in their ranks, fight for the most urgent needs of *every* worker's family, combine with this immediate struggle for the daily economic needs their political protest and struggle against the monarchy. For counter-revolution has roused in millions and tens of millions of people a bitter hatred for the monarchy, it has given them the rudiments of an understanding of the part played by it, and now the slogan of the advanced workers of the capital—Long live the democratic republic!—is making constant headway, spreading through thousands of channels, in the wake of every strike, reaching the backward strata, the remotest places, the "people," "the depths of Russia"!

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peaceful parade, but the solidarity of this army was remarkable. It was all the more ominous since, in addition to the recent excitement *among the workers*, *other* alarming symptoms were noted. On various naval vessels, *sailors* were arrested for conducting revolutionary propaganda. Judging by all the information which has found its way into the press, the situation is not very good on our naval vessels, which are not numerous as it is. . . . The *railwaymen* are also giving cause for worry. Nowhere, it is true, did things reach the stage of even an attempt to organize a strike, but arrests, including such a significant case as the arrest of A. A. Ushakov, an assistant station master on the Nikolayevskaya Railway, show that a certain danger lurks there, too.

"The revolutionary attempts of immature worker masses can, of course, have only a harmful effect on the result of the forthcoming elections to the Duma. These attempts are the more unreasonable... in view of the appointment of Manukhin by the Tsar... and the passing of the workers' insurance bill by the Council of the Empire. . . ."!!

Those are the reflections of a German Octobrist. We, on our part, must remark that we have received precise first-hand information about the sailors, and this information proves that the matter has been exaggerated and inflated by the *Novoye Vremya*. The *Okhrana* is obviously "working" in a provocative fashion. Premature attempts at an uprising would be utterly unwise. The working-class vanguard must understand that the principal requisite for a timely, *i.e.*, successful, armed uprising in Russia is the support of the working class by the democratic peasantry and the active participation of the armed forces.

Mass strikes in revolutionary epochs have their objective logic. They scatter hundreds of thousands and millions of sparks in all directions—and all around there is inflammable material resulting from extreme bitterness, unprecedented starvation, boundless tyranny, shameless and cynical mockery at the "pauper," the "muzhik," the private soldier. Add to this the unbridled Jew-baiting and incitement to pogroms carried on by the Black-Hundreds and stealthily fostered and directed by the Court gang of the dull-witted and bloodthirsty Nicholas Romanov. . . . "So it was, so it will be"—these revealing words uttered by the Minister Makarov will rebound to his own doom, to the doom of his class and his landlord tsar!

The rising revolutionary temper of the masses imposes great and responsible duties on every Social-Democratic worker, on every honest democrat. "Every possible support to the incipient movement of the masses [now we should say: the *already launched revolutionary* movement of the masses], which must be expanded on the basis of the slogans of the Party fully applied"—this is how the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party defined these duties. The Party slogans—

a democratic republic, the eight-hour day, the confiscation of all the landed estates—must become the slogans of the *entire* democracy, the slogans of the *peoples'* revolution.

In order to support and extend the movement of the masses, we need *organization and more organization.* Without an illegal Party it is impossible to conduct this work, and it is quite useless engaging in idle talk about it. In supporting and extending the onslaught of the masses we must carefully take into account the experience of 1905, and while explaining the need for and inevitability of an uprising, we must warn against and put a restraining hand upon *premature* attempts. The growth of mass strikes, the enlistment of other classes in the struggle, the state of the organizations, the temper of the masses—all this will of itself indicate the moment when it will be necessary for all forces to unite in a unanimous, determined, aggressive, supremely bold onslaught of the revolution upon the tsarist monarchy.

Without a victorious revolution there will be no freedom in Russia.

Without the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy by a proletarian and peasant uprising, there will be no victorious revolution in Russia.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 27,
June 17 [4], 1912

TWO UTOPIAS

Utopia is a Greek word, composed of "u" meaning "no" and "topos" meaning "place." Utopia means no place; it is a fantasy or invention, a place in Fairyland.

In politics utopia is a wish that can never come true, neither now nor hereafter—a wish that is not based on social forces and that derives no strength from the growth and the development of political, class forces.

The less freedom there is in a country, the scantier the manifestations of open class struggle and the lower the standard of enlightenment of the *masses*, the more easily will political utopias usually arise and the longer will they persist.

In contemporary Russia two kinds of political utopias have persisted most and, because of their attractiveness, have exerted a certain influence over the masses. These are the liberal utopia and the Narodnik utopia.

The liberal utopia consists in the belief that it is possible to secure improvements in Russia, in its political liberty and in the position of the working people, peacefully and harmoniously, without offending anyone, without removing the Purishkeviches, without ruthless, consistent class struggle. This is the utopia of *peace* between a free Russia and the Purishkeviches.

The Narodnik utopia is the dream of the Narodnik intellectuals and the Trudovik peasants who conceive it possible that a new and just division of the land can *abolish* the power and rule of capital and do away with wage slavery, or who imagine that a "just," "equalitarian" division of the land can be *maintained* under capitalism, under the rule of money, under commodity production.

What engenders these utopias and why their fairly strong persistence in contemporary Russia?

They are engendered by the interests of the classes which fight the old order, serfdom, disfranchisement—in a word, which "fight the Purishkeviches" and which do not occupy an independent position in this fight. Utopias, daydreaming, are engendered by this non-independence, this *weakness*. A propensity for daydreaming is the lot of the *weak*.

The liberal bourgeoisie in general and the liberal-bourgeois intelligentsia in particular cannot but aspire to liberty and a reign of law,

because without these the domination of the bourgeoisie is not complete, is not undivided, not guaranteed. But the bourgeoisie is *more* afraid of the movement of the masses than of reaction. Hence, the striking, incredible *weakness* of the liberals in politics, their absolute impotence. Hence the endless equivocations and falsehoods, hypocrisy and cowardly evasion in the entire policy of the liberals, who *must* play at democracy to get the masses on their side but who at the same time are profoundly anti-democratic, profoundly hostile to the movement of the masses, to their initiative, their way of "storming Heaven," as Marx once expressed himself with regard to one of the mass movements in Europe during the last century.*

The utopia of the liberals is a utopia of impotence in the matter of the political emancipation of Russia, a utopia of the self-interested money-bags who want to share "peacefully" in the privileges of the Purishkeviches and pass off this noble desire as the theory of the "peaceful" victory of Russian democracy. Liberal utopianism means daydreaming about how to beat the Purishkeviches without inflicting defeat upon them, how to smash them without hurting them. *Such* a utopia is clearly harmful not only because it is a utopia but also because it *corrupts* the democratic consciousness of the masses. Masses that believe in *this* utopia will never attain liberty; such masses are not worthy of liberty; such masses fully deserve to be made the laughing stock of the Purishkeviches.

The utopia of the Narodniks and Trudoviks is a daydream of the petty proprietors, who stand midway between the capitalists and the wage workers, an illusion that wage slavery can be abolished without a class struggle. When the question of economic emancipation will be as proximate, as immediate, as *urgent* for Russia as the question of political emancipation is today, the utopia of the Narodniks will prove *no less* harmful than the utopia of the liberals.

But Russia is today still in the period of her bourgeois and not her proletarian transformation; it is not the question of the economic emancipation of the proletariat that has become *supremely* mature, but the question of political emancipation, *i.e.* (at bottom) the question of complete bourgeois liberty.

And in the latter question the utopia of the Narodniks plays a peculiar historical role. This utopia, which is such with regard to the economic consequence that ought (and would) follow upon a new division of the land, is a concomitant and *symptom* of the great, mass *democratic* upsurgence of the peasant millions, *i.e.*, the millions that constitute the *majority* of the population in bourgeois-feudal, contemporary Russia. (In a purely bourgeois Russia, as in purely bourgeois Europe, the peasantry will not form the majority of the population.)

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* Marx uses this expression in his letter to Kugelmann, dated April 12, 1871, in characterizing the Paris Communards.—*Ed.*

The utopia of the liberals corrupts the democratic consciousness of the masses. The utopia of the Narodniks, while corrupting their *Socialist* consciousness, is a concomitant, a symptom, and to a certain extent even an index of their democratic upsurgence.

The dialectics of history is such that the Narodniks and the Trudoviks propose and advocate as an anti-capitalist remedy a thoroughgoing capitalist measure of maximum consistency in the domain of the agrarian question in Russia. An "equalitarian" new division of the land is utopian, but the completest possible rupture, so necessary for a *new* division, with all the old forms of landownership—both the landlord, the allotment and the "government" forms of ownership—is the most necessary, economically most progressive and, for a state like Russia, most urgent measure in the direction of bourgeois democracy. Let us recall here Engels' admirable dictum:

> "What formally may be economically incorrect, may all the same be correct from the point of view of world history."

Engels laid down this profound proposition in reference to utopian Socialism: formally this Socialism was economically "incorrect." This Socialism was "incorrect" when it declared that surplus value was an *injustice* from the point of view of the laws of exchange. As against *this* Socialism the theoreticians of bourgeois political economy were formally right, from the point of view of economics, for the surplus value is derived from the laws of exchange quite "naturally," quite "justly."

But utopian Socialism was *right* from the point of view of world history, as it was a symptom, an index, a herald of the class which, born of capitalism, has by now, the beginning of the twentieth century, become a mass force capable of putting an end to capitalism and irresistibly proceeding in that direction.

Engels' profound proposition must be borne in mind when evaluating present-day Narodnik or Trudovik utopias in Russia (and perhaps not only in Russia but in a whole number of Asiatic countries having bourgeois revolutions in the twentieth century).

Narodnik *democracy*, which formally is incorrect from the economic point of view, is a verity from the *historical* point of view; *this* democracy, while incorrect in its quality of a Socialist utopia, is a *verity* of that peculiar, historically conditioned democratic struggle of the peasant masses which is an inseparable element of the bourgeois transformation and a condition of its complete victory.

The liberal utopia disaccustoms the peasant masses to fighting. The Narodnik utopia expresses their eagerness to fight, but holds out the promise of a million blessings in case of victory while in actual fact this victory will yield them only a hundred. But is it not natural that the millions who are out to fight, who for ages have lived in unheard-of ignorance, distress and poverty, dirt, abandonment and downtroddenness, should magnify tenfold the fruits of a prospective victory?

The liberal utopia is a veil to cover up the selfish desires of the new exploiters to share in the privileges of the old exploiters. The Narodnik utopia is an expression of the aspiration of the toiling millions of the petty bourgeoisie to make a *clean sweep* of the old, feudal exploiters, and voices the false hope that the new, capitalist exploiters can be got rid of "at one and the same time."

Clearly the Marxists, who are opposed to *all* utopias, of whatever kind they be, must defend the independence of the class which can fight feudalism *with supreme devotion* for the very reason that it is not "caught" even one hundredth as much in the vice of property interests as is the bourgeoisie, which makes the latter an only half-hearted opponent and oftentimes an ally of the feudals. The peasants are "caught" in the vice of small commodity production; with a favourable conjuncture of historical circumstances they *can* achieve the most complete abolition of feudalism, but they will *always* inevitably, and not accidentally, manifest a certain degree of vacillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between liberalism and Marxism.

Clearly the Marxists must carefully separate the shell of the Narodnik utopias from their sound and valuable kernel—the sincere, resolute, militant democracy of the peasant masses.

In the old Marxian literature of the 'eighties one can find systematic efforts to separate this valuable democratic kernel. Some day historians will study these efforts systematically and trace their connection with what in the first decade of the twentieth century was given the name of "Bolshevism."

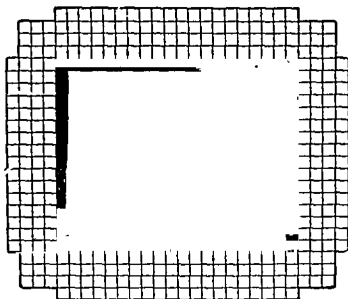
Written in October 1912.
First published in 1924
in No. 1 of the magazine *Zhizn*

BIG LANDLORD AND SMALL PEASANT LANDOWNERSHIP IN RUSSIA

In connection with the recent anniversary of February 19, 1861,* a reminder of the present distribution of land in European Russia will not be inappropriate.

The last official statistics of the distribution of land in European Russia were published by the Ministry of the Interior and relate to 1905.

According to these statistics there were (in round numbers) about 30,000 big landlords, each owning over 500 dessiatins, and between them they owned about 70,000,000 dessiatins.



An *equal area* of land was owned by some 10,000,000 poor peasant households.

On an average, therefore, for each big landlord there are about 330 poor peasant families, and while each peasant family owns 7 (*seven*) dessiatins, each big landlord owns 2,300 (*two thousand three hundred*) dessiatins.

* February 19, 1861—the date on which the tsar's manifesto on abolition of serfdom was published.—*Ed.*

To make this graphically clear we print the above diagram.

The large white rectangle in the centre represents the estate of a big landlord. The small squares surrounding it represent the small peasant holdings:

In all, there are 324 squares, and the area of the large white rectangle is equivalent to 320 squares.

Pravda No. 51 (255),
March 15 [2], 1913

BACKWARD EUROPE AND ADVANCED ASIA

The conjunction of these words seems paradoxical. Who does not know that Europe is advanced and Asia backward? But the words taken for the title for this article contain a bitter truth.

In civilized and advanced Europe, with its brilliantly developed machine industry, its rich all-round culture and its constitution, a historical moment has supervened when the commanding bourgeoisie, out of fear for the growth and increasing strength of the proletariat, is supporting everything backward, effete and mediaeval. The obsolescent bourgeoisie is combining with all obsolete and obsolescent forces in order to preserve tottering wage slavery.

Advanced Europe is commanded by a bourgeoisie which supports everything backward. Europe is advanced today not *thanks to*, but *in spite of* the bourgeoisie, for the proletariat alone is adding to the million-strong army of champions of a better future, it alone is preserving and propagating implacable enmity towards backwardness, savagery, privilege, slavery and the humiliation of man by man.

In "advanced" Europe, the *sole advanced* class is the proletariat. The living bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is prepared to go to any length of savagery, brutality and crime in order to preserve capitalist slavery, which is perishing.

And a more striking example of this decay of the *entire* European bourgeoisie can scarcely be cited than the support it is lending to *reaction* in Asia on behalf of the selfish aims of the financial dealers and capitalist swindlers.

Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength. There the bourgeoisie is *still* siding with the people against reaction. *Hundreds* of millions of people are awakening to life, light and liberty. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy! What sympathy all honest democrats cherish for young Asia!

And "advanced" Europe? It is plundering China and helping the foes of democracy, the foes of liberty in China!

Here is a simple but instructive little calculation. The new Chinese loan has been concluded *against* Chinese democracy: "Europe" is *for* Yuan Shih-

kai, who is paving the way for a military dictatorship. Why is it for him? Because of a profitable little deal. The loan has been concluded for a sum of about 250,000,000 rubles, at the rate of 84 per 100. That means that the bourgeois of "Europe" will *pay* the Chinese 210,000,000 rubles, but will take from the public 225,000,000 rubles. There you have at one stroke a pure profit of *fifteen million rubles* in a few weeks! "*Pure*" profit, indeed, is it not?

But what if the Chinese people do not recognize the loan? China, after all is a republic, and the majority in parliament are *against* the loan.

Oh, then "advanced" Europe will cry "civilization," "order," "culture" and "country"! Then it will set the *guns* in motion and crush the republic of "backward" Asia, in alliance with the adventurer, traitor and friend of reaction, Yuan Shih-kai!

All commanding Europe, all the European bourgeoisie is *in alliance* with all the forces of reaction and mediaevalism in China.

But on the other hand, all young Asia, that is, the hundreds of millions of toilers in Asia, have a reliable ally in the shape of the proletariat of all the civilized countries. No force on earth can prevent its victory, which will liberate both the peoples of Europe and the peoples of Asia.

Pravda No. 113 (317),
May 31 [18], 1913

THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Point 9 of the program of the Russian Marxists, which deals with the right of nations to self-determination, has given rise lately (as we have already pointed out in *Prosveshcheniye*) to a regular crusade of the opportunists. The Russian Liquidator Semkovsky in the St. Petersburg Liquidatorist newspaper, the Bundist Liebmann and the Ukrainian Social-Nationalist Yurkevich in their respective journals, severely came down upon this point and treated it with an air of supreme contempt. There is no doubt that this "twelve languages invasion" of opportunism into our Marxian program is closely connected with present-day nationalistic vacillations in general. Hence, we think that a detailed analysis of this question is opportune. We shall only observe that none of the above-mentioned opportunists has adduced a single independent argument; all of them merely repeat what was said by Rosa Luxemburg* in her long Polish article of 1908-09, "The National Question and Autonomy." In our exposition we shall deal mainly with the "original" arguments of this last-named author.

I. WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS?

Naturally, this is the first question to arise when any attempt is made to consider what is called self-determination in a Marxian way. What is meant by that term? Should we seek for an answer in legal definitions deduced from all sorts of "general concepts" of law? Or should we seek an answer in the historical and economic study of the national movements?

It is not surprising that the Semkovskys, Liebmanns and Yurkeviches did not even think of raising this question, but limited themselves merely to sneering about the "obscurity" of the Marxian program, apparently not

* Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919)—a prominent figure in the Polish and German Social-Democratic movement, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany, a passionate revolutionary and tireless champion of the cause of the working class. Lenin had a high opinion of the services Rosa Luxemburg rendered to the international working-class movement but at the same time sharply criticized her semi-Menshevik position on a number of important questions of revolutionary Marxism, particularly the national question.—*Ed.*

knowing in their simplicity that self-determination of nations is dealt with not only in the Russian program of 1903, but also in the resolution of the London International Congress of 1896 (with which I shall deal in detail in the proper place). What is surprising is the fact that Rosa Luxemburg, who declaims a great deal about the alleged abstract and metaphysical nature of the point in question should herself succumb to the sin of abstraction and metaphysics. It is Rosa Luxemburg herself who is continually straying into generalities about self-determination (including the very amusing speculation on the question of how the will of the nation is to be ascertained), without anywhere clearly and precisely asking herself whether the issue is determined by juridical definitions or by the experience of the national movements throughout the world.

A precise formulation of this question, which a Marxist cannot avoid, would at once have shaken nine-tenths of Rosa Luxemburg's arguments. This is not the first time national movements have arisen in Russia, nor are they peculiar to Russia alone. Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. The economic basis of these movements is the fact that in order to achieve complete victory for commodity production the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, must have politically united territories with a population speaking the same language, and all obstacles to the development of this language and to its consolidation in literature must be removed. Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity of language and its unimpeded development are most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commercial intercourse on a scale commensurate with modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its separate classes and lastly, for the establishment of close connection between the market and each and every proprietor, big or little, seller and buyer.

Therefore, the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of *national states*, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The profoundest economic factors drive towards this goal, and therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilized world, the *typical*, normal state for the capitalist period is the national state.

Consequently, if we want to learn the meaning of self-determination of nations not by juggling with legal definitions, or "inventing" abstract definitions, but by examining the historical and economic conditions of the national movements, we shall inevitably reach the conclusion that self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, the formation of an independent national state.

Later on, we shall see still other reasons why it would be incorrect to understand the right to self-determination to mean anything but the right to separate state existence. At present, we must deal with Rosa Luxemburg's efforts to "dismiss" the unavoidable conclusion that the striving to form a national state rests on deep economic foundations.

Rosa Luxemburg is quite familiar with Kautsky's pamphlet *Nationality and Internationality*. (Supplement to *Die Neue Zeit*, No. 1, 1907-08; Russian translation in the magazine *Nauchnaya Mysl* [*Scientific Thought*], Riga, 1910.) She knows that Kautsky, after carefully analysing the question of the national state in Chapter Four of that pamphlet, arrived at the conclusion that Otto Bauer "*underestimates* the force of the urge to create a national state" (p. 23). Rosa Luxemburg herself quotes the following words of Kautsky: "The national state is the form of state that is *most suitable* for present-day conditions" (*i.e.*, capitalist, civilized, economically progressive conditions, as distinguished from mediaeval, pre-capitalist, etc.), "it is the form in which it can best fulfil its functions" (*i.e.*, the function of securing the freest, widest and speediest development of capitalism). We must add to this a still more precise concluding remark by Kautsky: heterogeneous nation states (what are called nationality states as distinguished from national states) are "always states whose internal constitution has for some reason or other remained abnormal or underdeveloped" (backward). Needless to say, Kautsky speaks of abnormality exclusively in the sense of lack of conformity with what is best adapted to the requirements of developing capitalism.

The question now is, how did Rosa Luxemburg treat Kautsky's historical-economic conclusions on this point? Are they right or wrong? Is Kautsky right in his historical-economic theory, or is Bauer, whose theory has a psychological basis? What is the connection between Bauer's undoubted "national opportunism," his defence of cultural-national autonomy, his nationalistic infatuation ("here and there an emphasis on the national aspect," as Kautsky put it), his "enormous exaggeration of the national aspect and complete oblivion to the international aspect" (Kautsky)—and his underestimation of the urge to create a national state?

Rosa Luxemburg did not even raise this question. She failed to notice this connection. She did not weigh the *totality* of Bauer's theoretical views. She did not even draw a contrast between the historical-economic and the psychological theory of the national question. She confined herself to the following remarks in criticism of Kautsky:

> "This 'best' national state is only an abstraction, which can easily be developed and defended theoretically, but which does not correspond to reality." (*Przegląd Socjal-Demokratyczny* [*Social-Democratic Review*], 1908, No. 6, p. 499.)

And in corroboration of this bold statement there follow arguments to the effect that the "right to self-determination" of small nations is rendered illusory by the development of the great capitalist powers and by imperialism.

> "Can one seriously speak," exclaims Rosa Luxemburg, "about the 'self-determination' of the formally independent Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Serbs, Greeks, partly even the Swiss, whose inde-

pendence is itself a result of the political struggle and the diplomatic game of the 'Concert of Europe' "?! (P. 500.)

The state that best suits the conditions is "not a national state, as Kautsky believes, but a predatory state." Several score of figures are quoted relating to the size of British, French and other colonies.

Reading such arguments one cannot help marvelling how the author contrived not to understand *what's what*! To teach Kautsky with a serious mien that small states are economically dependent on big ones, that a struggle is going on between the bourgeois states for the predatory suppression of other nations, that imperialism and colonies exist—savours of ridiculously childish attempts to be clever, for all this is altogether irrelevant to the subject. Not only small states, but even Russia, for example, is economically entirely dependent on the power of the imperialist finance capital of the "rich" bourgeois countries. Not only the miniature Balkan states, but even America in the nineteenth century was economically a colony of Europe, as Marx pointed out in *Capital*. Kautsky, and every Marxist, is well aware of this, of course, but it has nothing whatever to do with the question of national movements and the national state.

For the question of the political self-determination of nations in bourgeois society, and of their independence as states, Rosa Luxemburg has substituted the question of their economic independence. This is as intelligent as if someone, in discussing the demand in the program for the supremacy of parliament, *i.e.*, the assembly of people's representatives, in a bourgeois state, were to expound the perfectly correct conviction that big capital is supreme under any regime in a bourgeois country.

There is no doubt that the greater part of Asia, the most populous part of the world, consists either of colonies of the "Great Powers" or of states which are extremely dependent and oppressed as nations. But does this commonly known circumstance in any way shake the undoubted fact that in Asia itself the conditions for the most complete development of commodity production, for the freest, widest and speediest growth of capitalism, have been created only in Japan, *i.e.*, only in an independent national state? This state is a bourgeois state, therefore, it, itself, has begun to oppress other nations and to enslave colonies. We cannot say whether Asia will have time before the downfall of capitalism to become crystallized into a system of independent national states, like Europe; but it remains an undisputed fact that capitalism, having awakened Asia, has called forth national movements everywhere in that continent, too; that the tendency of these movements is towards the creation of national states there; that the best conditions for the development of capitalism are ensured precisely by such states. The example of Asia speaks in *favour* of Kautsky and *against* Rosa Luxemburg.

The example of the Balkan states also speaks against her, for everyone can see now that the best conditions for the development of capitalism in

the Balkans are created precisely in proportion to the creation of independent national states in that peninsula.

Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg notwithstanding, the example of the whole of progressive, civilized mankind, the example of the Balkans and the example of Asia prove that Kautsky's proposition is absolutely correct: the national state is the rule and the "norm" of capitalism; the heterogeneous nation state represents backwardness, or is an exception. From the standpoint of national relations, the best conditions for the development of capitalism are undoubtedly provided by the national state. This does not mean, of course, that such a state, while retaining bourgeois relations, could avert the exploitation and oppression of nations. It only means that Marxists cannot ignore the powerful *economic* factors that give rise to the aspiration to create national states. It means that "self-determination of nations" in the program of the Marxists *cannot,* from a historical-economic point of view, have any other meaning than political self-determination, political independence, the formation of a national state.

On what conditions the bourgeois-democratic demand for a "national state" is to be supported from a Marxian, *i.e.,* class proletarian, point of view will be dealt with in detail later on. At present we confine ourselves to the definition of the *concept* "self-determination" and must only note that Rosa Luxemburg *knows* what this concept means ("national state"), whereas her opportunist partisans, the Liebmanns, the Semkovskys, the Yurkeviches *do not even know that!*

II. THE CONCRETE HISTORICAL PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION

The categorical demand of Marxian theory in examining any social question is that the question be formulated within *definite* historical limits, and if it refers to a particular country (*e.g.,* the national program for a given country), that the specific features that distinguish that country from others within the same historical epoch be taken into account.

What does this categorical demand of Marxism imply as regards the question we are discussing?

First of all, it implies that a strict distinction must be drawn between two periods of capitalism, which differ radically from each other as far as the national movement is concerned. On the one hand, the period of the downfall of feudalism and absolutism, the period of the formation of bourgeois-democratic society and states, when the national movements for the first time become mass movements and in one way or another draw *all* classes of the population into politics by means of the press, participation in representative institutions, etc. On the other hand, we have the period of definitely-crystallized capitalist states with a long-established constitutional regime, with a *strongly developed antagonism between the proletariat*

and the bourgeoisie—the period that may be called the eve of the downfall of capitalism.

The typical features of the first period are the awakening of national movements and the drawing of the peasants, the most numerous and the most "sluggish" section of the population, into these movements, in connection with the struggle for political liberty in general and for national rights in particular. The typical features of the second period are the absence of mass bourgeois-democratic movements; the fact that developed capitalism, while bringing the nations that have already been fully drawn into commercial intercourse closer together and causing them to intermingle to an increasing degree, pushes into the forefront the antagonism between internationally united capital and the international labour movement.

Of course, the two periods cannot be separated into watertight compartments; they are connected by numerous transitional links, while the various countries differ from each other in the rapidity of their national development, in national composition and distribution of their population, and so forth. The Marxists of a given country cannot proceed to draw up their national program without taking into account all these general historical and concrete state conditions.

And it is just here that we come up against the weakest point in the arguments of Rosa Luxemburg. With extraordinary zeal she embellishes her article with a collection of "strong" words against point 9 of our program, declaring it to be "sweeping," "a platitude," "a metaphysical phrase," and so on *ad infinitum*. It would be natural to expect that an author who so magnificently condemns metaphysics (in the Marxian sense, *i.e.*, anti-dialectics) and empty abstractions would set us an example of how to make a concrete historical analysis of the question. We are discussing the national program of the Marxists of a definite country—Russia, in a definite period—the beginning of the twentieth century. But does Rosa Luxemburg raise the question as to *what historical* period Russia is passing through, as to *what are the concrete* specific features of the national question and the national movements of that *particular* country in that *particular* period?

No! She says absolutely nothing about it! In her work you will not find even the hint of an analysis of how the national question stands in *Russia* in the present historical period, or of the specific features of *Russia* in this particular respect!

We are told that the national question stands differently in the Balkans than in Ireland; that Marx appraised the Polish and Czech national movements in the concrete conditions of 1848 in this way (a page of excerpts from Marx); that Engels appraised the struggle of the forest cantons of Switzerland against Austria and the battle of Morgarten which took place in 1315 in that way (a page of quotations from Engels with Kautsky's commentaries on them); that Lassalle regarded the peasant war in Germany of the sixteenth century as reactionary, etc.

It cannot be said that these remarks and quotations are remarkable for their novelty, but, at all events, it is interesting for the reader to recall again and again precisely how Marx, Engels and Lassalle approached the analysis of concrete historical questions in individual countries. And a perusal of these instructive quotations from Marx and Engels reveals most strikingly the ridiculous position Rosa Luxemburg has placed herself in. Eloquently and angrily she preaches the need for a concrete historical analysis of the national question in various countries at various periods; but she makes not the *slightest* attempt to determine through *what* historical stage in the development of capitalism *Russia* is passing at the beginning of the twentieth century or the *specific features* of the national question in this country. Rosa Luxemburg gives examples of how *others* have treated the question in a Marxian fashion, as if deliberately stressing how often good intentions pave the road to hell, how often good counsels cover up unwillingness or inability to follow these counsels in practice.

Here is one of her edifying comparisons. In protesting against the demand for the independence of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg refers to her work of 1893, in which she demonstrated the rapid "industrial development of Poland" and the sale of the latter's manufactured goods in Russia. Needless to say, no conclusion whatever can be drawn from this on the question of the *right* to self-determination; it only proves the disappearance of the old, squire-ridden Poland, etc. But Rosa Luxemburg always imperceptibly passes on to the conclusion that among the factors that unite Russia and Poland, the purely economic factors of modern capitalist relations now predominate.

Then our Rosa passes on to the question of autonomy, and though her article is entitled "The National Question and Autonomy," *in general*, she begins to argue that the Kingdom of Poland has an *exclusive* right to autonomy (*cf. Prosveshcheniye*, 1913, No. 12). In order to support the right of Poland to autonomy, Rosa Luxemburg evidently judges the state system of Russia by its economic and political and sociological characteristics and everyday life—a totality of traits, which produce the concept "Asiatic despotism." (*Przegląd*, No. 12, p. 137.)

It is common knowledge that a state system of that type possesses great stability in those cases where completely patriarchal pre-capitalist traits are predominant in the economic system and where commodity production and class differentiation are hardly developed. If, however, in a country where the state system bears a very distinct *pre*-capitalist character, there is a nationally delimited region where capitalism is *rapidly* developing, then the more rapidly that capitalism develops, the greater will be the antagonism between it and the *pre*-capitalist state system, and the more probably will the more progressive region separate from the whole—with [illegible] is connected not by "modern capitalistic," but by "Asiatic-des-

[illegible] Luxemburg's reasonin[illegible], even on the question of the

social structure of the government in Russia in relation to bourgeois Poland; and she does not even raise the question of the concrete, historical, specific features of the national movements in Russia.

This question we must deal with.

III. THE CONCRETE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN RUSSIA AND RUSSIA'S BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REFORMATION

> "In spite of the elasticity of the principle of 'the right of nations to self-determination,' which is a mere platitude, being, obviously, equally applicable not only to the nations inhabiting Russia, but also to the nations inhabiting Germany and Austria, Switzerland and Sweden, America and Australia, we do not find it in the programs of any of the present-day Socialist parties...." (*Przegląd*, No. 6, p. 483.)

This is what Rosa Luxemburg writes at the very beginning of her crusade against point 9 of the Marxists' program. In trying to foist on us the conception of this point in the program as a "mere platitude" Rosa Luxemburg herself falls victim to this error, alleging with amusing audacity that this point is "obviously, equally applicable" to Russia, Germany, etc.

Obviously, we reply, Rosa Luxemburg decided to make her article a collection of errors in logic suitable for schoolboy exercises. For Rosa Luxemburg's tirade is absolute nonsense and a mockery of the historically concrete presentation of the question.

Interpreting the Marxian program in a Marxian and not in a childish way, it is very easy to surmise that it refers to bourgeois-democratic national movements. If that is the case, and it undoubtedly is the case, it is "obvious" that this program "sweepingly," as a "platitude," etc., refers to *all* instances of bourgeois-democratic national movements. And had Rosa Luxemburg given the slightest thought to this, she would have come to the no less obvious conclusion that our program refers *only* to cases where such a movement is actually in existence.

Had she pondered over these obvious considerations, Rosa Luxemburg would have easily perceived what nonsense she was uttering. In accusing *us* of uttering a "platitude" she uses *against us* the argument that no mention is made of the right to self-determination in the programs of those countries where there are *no* bourgeois-democratic national movements! A remarkably clever argument!

A comparison of the political and economic development of various countries as well as of the Marxian programs is of enormous importance from the standpoint of Marxism, for there can be no doubt that all modern states are of the same capitalist nature and are subject to the same law of development. But such a comparison must be drawn in a sensible way. The

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Thus, Rosa Luxemburg's reasoning is faulty even on the question of the

social structure of the government in Russia in relation to bourgeois Poland; and she does not even raise the question of the concrete, historical, specific features of the national movements in Russia.

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elementary condition required for this is the elucidation of the question of whether the historical periods of the development of the countries compared are at all *comparable*. For instance, only absolute ignoramuses (such as Prince E. Trubetskoy in *Russkaya Mysl* [*Russian Thought*]) are capable of "comparing" the agrarian program of the Russian Marxist with those of Western Europe, for our program answers the question regarding a *bourgeois-democratic* agrarian reformation, whereas in the Western countries no such question exists.

The same applies to the national question. In most Western countries this question was settled long ago. It is ridiculous to seek in the programs of Western Europe for an answer to non-existent questions. Rosa Luxemburg has lost sight of the most important thing here, *viz.*, the difference between countries where the bourgeois-democratic reformation has long been completed and those where it has not yet been completed.

This difference is the crux of the matter. Her complete disregard of this difference transforms Rosa Luxemburg's exceedingly long article into a collection of empty, meaningless platitudes.

In Western, continental Europe, the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions embraces a fairly definite portion of time, approximately from 1789 to 1871. This was precisely the period of national movements and the creation of national states. When this period drew to a close Western Europe had been transformed into a settled system of bourgeois states, which, as a general rule, were national uniform states. Therefore, to seek the right of self-determination in the programs of present-day West-European Socialists is to betray one's ignorance of the ABC of Marxism.

In Eastern Europe and in Asia the period of bourgeois-democratic revolutions only began in 1905. The revolutions in Russia, Persia, Turkey and China, the wars in the Balkans, such is the chain of world events of *our* period in our "Orient." And only the blind can fail to see in this chain of events the awakening of a *whole series* of bourgeois-democratic national movements, striving to create nationally independent and nationally uniform states. It is precisely and solely because Russia and the neighbouring countries are passing through this period that we require an item in our program on the right of nations to self-determination.

But let us continue the quotation from Rosa Luxemburg's article a little further. She writes:

> "In particular, the program of a party which is operating in a state with an extremely mixed national composition and for which the national question is a matter of first-rate importance—the program of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party—does not contain the principle of the right of nations to self-determination." (*Ibid.*)

Thus, an attempt is made to convince the reader by the example of Austria "in particular." Let us see whether this example is a reasonable one by examining this definite historical case.

In the first place, we raise the fundamental question of the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In Austria this revolution began in 1848, and was over in 1867. Since then, for nearly half a century, there has prevailed what on the whole is an established bourgeois constitution on the basis of which a legal workers' party is legally functioning.

Therefore, in the inherent conditions of the development of Austria (*i.e.*, from the standpoint of the development of capitalism in Austria in general, and among its separate nations in particular), there are *no* factors that produce leaps, one of the concomitants of which may be the formation of nationally independent states. In assuming by her comparison that Russia is in an analogous position in this respect, Rosa Luxemburg not only makes a radically wrong, anti-historical assumption, but she involuntarily slips into Liquidatorism.

Secondly, the entirely different relations between the nationalities in Austria and in Russia are particularly important for the question we are concerned with. Not only was Austria for a long time a state in which the Germans were predominant, but the Austrian Germans laid claim to hegemony in the German nation as a whole. This "claim," as Rosa Luxemburg (who is seemingly so averse to commonplaces, platitudes, abstractions ...) will perhaps be kind enough to remember, was defeated in the war of 1866. The German nation predominating in Austria found itself *outside the pale* of the independent German state which finally took shape in 1871. On the other hand, the attempt of the Hungarians to create an independent national state collapsed as far back as 1849, under the blows of the Russian army of serfs.

A very peculiar situation was thus created: a striving on the part of the Hungarians and then of the Czechs, not for separation from Austria, but, on the contrary, for the preservation of Austria's integrity, precisely in order to preserve national independence, which might have been completely crushed by more rapacious and powerful neighbours! Owing to this peculiar situation, Austria assumed the form of a double centred (dual) state, and is now being transformed into a three-centred (triune) state (Germans, Hungarians, Slavs).

Is there anything like this in Russia? Is there in our country a striving of "alien races" for unity with the Great Russians in order to escape a *worse* national oppression?

It suffices to put this question to see that the comparison between Russia and Austria in the question of self-determination of nations is senseless, platitudinous and ignorant.

The peculiar conditions in Russia as regards the national question are just the reverse of those we see in Austria. Russia is a state with a single national centre—Great Russia. The Great Russians occupy a vast, uninterrupted stretch of territory, and number about 70,000,000. The specific features of this national state are, firstly, that "alien races" (which, on

the whole, form the majority of the entire population—57 per cent) inhabit the border regions. Secondly, the oppression of these alien races is much worse than in the neighbouring states (and not in the European states alone). Thirdly, in a number of cases the oppressed nationalities inhabiting the border regions have compatriots across the border who enjoy greater national independence (suffice it to mention the Finns, the Swedes, the Poles, the Ukrainians and the Rumanians along the western and southern frontiers of the state). Fourthly, the development of capitalism and the general level of culture are often higher in the border regions inhabited by "alien races" than in the centre. Lastly, it is precisely in the neighbouring Asiatic states that we observe incipient bourgeois revolutions and national movements, which partly affect the kindred nationalities within the borders of Russia.

Thus, it is precisely the concrete, historical specific features of the national question in Russia that make the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination in the present period a matter of special urgency in our country.

Incidentally, even from the purely factual aspect, Rosa Luxemburg's assertion that the program of the Austrian Social-Democrats does not contain the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination is incorrect. We need only open the minutes of the Brunn Congress, which adopted the national program, to find the statements by the Ruthenian Social-Democrat Hankevicz on behalf of the entire Ukrainian (Ruthenian) delegation (p. 85 of the minutes), and by the Polish Social-Democrat Reger on behalf of the entire Polish delegation (p. 108), to the effect that one of the aims of the Austrian Social-Democrats of both the above-mentioned nations is to secure *national unity, the freedom and independence of their nations.* Hence, Austrian Social-Democracy while not including the right of nations to self-determination directly in its program, nevertheless, allows the demand for national independence to be advanced by *sections* of the Party. In reality this means, of course, the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination! Thus, Rosa Luxemburg's reference to Austria speaks *against* Rosa Luxemburg in *all* respects.

IV. "PRACTICALNESS" IN THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The opportunists were particularly keen in taking up Rosa Luxemburg's argument that there is nothing "practical" in point 9 of our program. Rosa Luxemburg is so delighted with this argument that in some parts of her article this "slogan" is repeated eight times on a single page.

She writes:

Point 9 "gives no practical lead on the day-to-day policy of the proletariat, no practical solution of national problems."

Let us examine this argument, which elsewhere is also formulated in a way that implies that point 9 is either meaningless, or else pledges us to support all national aspirations.

What does the demand for "practicalness" in the national question imply?

Either support for all national aspirations; or the answer "yes" or "no" to the question of secession in the case of every nation; or that, national demands are "practicable" in general.

Let us consider all these three possible meanings of the demand for "practicalness."

The bourgeoisie, which naturally exercises hegemony (leadership) in the beginning of every national movement, considers it practical to support all national aspirations. But the policy of the proletariat in the national question (as in other questions) supports the bourgeoisie only in a definite direction; it never coincides with the policy of the bourgeoisie. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only in order to secure national peace (which the bourgeoisie cannot bring about completely, which can be achieved only with *complete* democracy), in order to secure equal rights and to create better conditions for the class struggle. Therefore, *against the practicalness* of the bourgeoisie the proletarians advance their *principles* in the national question; they always give the bourgeoisie *only conditional* support. In national affairs the bourgeoisie always strives for privileges or exceptional advantages for its *own* nation; and this is called being "practical." The proletariat is opposed to all privileges, to all exceptionalism. Those who demand that it should be "practical" are trailing in the wake of the bourgeoisie, are falling into opportunism.

The demand for an answer "yes" or "no" to the question of secession in the case of every nation seems to be a very "practical" one. In reality it is absurd; it is metaphysical in theory, and in practice it means subordinating the proletariat to the policy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie always places its national demands in the forefront. It advances them categorically. For the proletariat, however, these demands are subordinate to the interests of the class struggle. Theoretically, it is impossible to vouch beforehand whether the secession of a given nation from, or its equality with another nation will complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution; *in either case,* the important thing for the proletariat is to ensure the development of its class. For the bourgeoisie it is important to hamper this development and to put the aims of "its" nation before the aims of the proletariat. That is why the proletariat confines itself, so to say, to the negative demand for the recognition of the *right* to self-determination, without guaranteeing anything to any nation, without undertaking to give *anything at the expense* of another nation.

This may not be "practical," but in reality it is the best guarantee for the achievement of the most democratic of all possible solutions. The proletariat needs *only* these guarantees, whereas the bourgeoisie of every nation

requires guarantees for its *own* interests, irrespective of the position of (or the possible disadvantages to) other nations.

The bourgeoisie is most interested in the "practicability" of the given demand—hence the perennial policy of coming to terms with the bourgeoisie of other nations to the detriment of the proletariat. For the proletariat, however, the important thing is to strengthen its class against the bourgeoisie and to educate the masses in the spirit of consistent democracy and Socialism.

The opportunists may think this is not "practical," but it is the only real guarantee of a maximum of national equality and peace, in spite of the feudal landlords and the *nationalist* bourgeoisie.

The whole task of the proletarians in the national question is "impractical" from the standpoint of the *nationalist* bourgeoisie of every nation, because, being opposed to all nationalism, the proletarians demand "abstract" equality, they demand that on principle, there shall be no privileges, however slight. Failing to grasp this, Rosa Luxemburg, by her unwise eulogy of practicalness, opened the gate wide for the opportunists, and especially for opportunist concessions to Great-Russian nationalism.

Why Great-Russian? Because the Great Russians in Russia are an oppressing nation, and opportunism on the national question will naturally be differently expressed among the oppressed nations than among the oppressing nations.

The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations will call upon the proletariat to support its aspirations unconditionally on the plea that its demands are "practical." It would be more practical to say a plain "yes" in favour of the secession of a *particular* nation than in favour of all nations having the *right* to secede.

The proletariat is opposed to such practicalness. While recognizing equality and an equal right to a national state, it attaches supreme value to the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and evaluates every national demand, every national separation, *from the angle* of the class struggle of the workers. This call for practicalness is merely a call for the uncritical acceptance of bourgeois aspirations.

We are told: by supporting the right to secession you are supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. This is what Rosa Luxemburg says, and it is echoed by Semkovsky, the opportunist, who, by the way, is the only representative of Liquidatorist ideas on this question in the Liquidatorist newspaper!

Our reply to this is: No, a "practical" solution of this question is important for the bourgeoisie. The important thing for the workers is to distinguish the *principles* of two trends. *If* the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation fights against the oppressing one, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, *in favour*; for we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression. But if the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for *its own* bourgeois nationalism we are opposed.

We fight against the privileges and violence of the oppressing nation, but we do not condone the strivings for privileges on the part of the oppressed nation.

If we do not raise and advocate the slogan of the *right* to secession we shall play into the hands, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of the feudal landlords and the despotism of the *oppressing* nation. Kautsky long ago advanced this argument against Rosa Luxemburg, and the argument is indisputable. When Rosa Luxemburg, in her anxiety not to "assist" the nationalistic bourgeoisie of Poland, rejects the *right* to secession in the program of the *Russian* Marxists, she is *in fact* assisting the Great-Russian Black-Hundreds. She is in fact assisting opportunist resignation to the privileges (and worse than privileges) of the Great Russians.

Carried away by the struggle against nationalism in Poland, Rosa Luxemburg has forgotten the nationalism of the Great Russians, although *this* nationalism is the most formidable at the present time, it is the nationalism that is less bourgeois and more feudal, and it is the principal obstacle to democracy and to the proletarian struggle. The bourgeois nationalism of *every* oppressed nation has a general democratic content which is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we support *unconditionally*, while strictly distinguishing it from the tendency towards national exceptionalism, while fighting against the tendency of the Polish bourgeois to oppress the Jews, etc., etc.

This is "impractical" from the standpoint of a bourgeois and a philistine; but it is the only policy in the national question that is practical, that is based on principles and that really furthers democracy, liberty and proletarian unity.

The recognition of the right to secession for all; the appraisal of each concrete question of secession from the point of view of removing all inequality, all privileges, all exceptionalism.

Let us examine the position of an oppressing nation. Can a nation be free if it oppresses other nations? It cannot. The interests of the freedom of the Great-Russian population* demand a struggle against such oppression. The long, age-long history of the suppression of the movements of the oppressed nations, the systematic propaganda in favour of such suppression on the part of the "upper" classes, have created enormous obstacles to the cause of freedom of the Great-Russian people itself, in the form of prejudices, etc.

The Great-Russian Black-Hundreds deliberately foster and fan these prejudices. The Great-Russian bourgeoisie tolerates them or panders to them. The Great-Russian proletariat cannot achieve *its own* aims, cannot

* This word appears un-Marxian to a certain L. Vl. in Paris. This L. Vl. is amusingly "*superklug*" (over-clever). This "over-clever" L. Vl. apparently proposes to write an essay on the deletion from our minimum program (having in mind the class struggle!) of the words "population," "people," etc.

clear the road to freedom for itself unless it systematically combats these prejudices.

In Russia, the creation of an independent national state so far remains the privilege of one nation, the Great-Russian nation. We, the Great-Russian proletarians, defend no privileges, and we do not defend this privilege. In our fight we take the given state as our basis; we unite the workers of all nations in the given state; we cannot vouch for any particular path of national development, we are marching to our class goal by *all* possible paths.

But we cannot advance to that goal unless we combat all nationalism, unless we fight for the equality of the workers of all nations. Whether the Ukraine, for example, is destined to form an independent state is a matter that will be determined by a thousand factors, which cannot be foreseen. Without attempting idle "*guesses*," we firmly uphold what is beyond doubt: the right of the Ukraine to form such a state. We respect this right; we do not uphold the privileges of the Great Russians over the Ukrainians; we *teach* the masses to recognize that right, and to reject the *state* privileges of any nation.

In the leaps which all nations take in the period of bourgeois revolutions, clashes and struggle over the right to a national state are possible and probable. We proletarians declare in advance that we are *opposed* to Great-Russian privileges, and this is what guides our entire propaganda and agitation.

In her quest for "practicalness" Rosa Luxemburg has overlooked the *principal* practical task both of the Great-Russian proletariat and of the proletariat of other nationalities: the task of daily agitation and propaganda against all state and national privileges and for the right, the equal right of all nations to their national state. This task is (at present) our principal task in the national question, for only in this way can we defend the interests of democracy and the alliance of all proletarians of all na*tions on an equal footing*.

This propaganda may be "unpractical" from the point of view of the Great-Russian oppressors as well as from the point of view of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations (both demand a *definite* "yes" or "no," and accuse the Social-Democrats of being "vague"). In reality it is this propaganda, and only this propaganda, that ensures the really democratic, the really Socialist education of the masses. Only such propaganda ensures the greatest chances of national peace in Russia, should she remain a heterogeneous nation state, and the most peaceful (and for the proletarian class struggle, harmless) division into separate national states, should the question of such a division arise.

To explain this, the only proletarian policy in the national question, more concretely we shall examine the attitude of Great-Russian Liberalism towards "self-determination of nations," and the example of the secession of Norway from Sweden.

V. THE LIBERAL BOURGEOISIE AND THE SOCIALIST OPPORTUNISTS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

We have seen that one of Rosa Luxemburg's "trump cards" in her crusade against the program of the Russian Marxists is the following argument: The recognition of the right to self-determination is tantamount to supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. On the other hand, she says, if by this right we mean nothing more than combating the use of violence against other nations, there is no need to have a special point in the program about it, for Social-Democrats are, in general, opposed to all national oppression and all national inequality.

The first argument, as Kautsky irrefutably proved nearly twenty years ago, is a case of blaming other people for one's own nationalism; for in fearing the nationalism of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, Rosa Luxemburg is *actually* playing into the hands of the Black-Hundred nationalism of the Great Russians! Her second argument is virtually a timid evasion of the question: Does the recognition of national equality include the recognition of the right to secession or not? If it does, then Rosa Luxemburg admits that, in principle, point 9 of our program is correct. If it does not, then she does not believe in national equality. Twists and evasions will not help matters here in the least!

The best way to test the above and all analogous arguments, however, is to study the attitude of the *various classes* of society towards this question. A Marxist must make this test. He must proceed from the objective; he must examine the relations of the classes on this point. Failing to do this, Rosa Luxemburg is guilty of those very sins of metaphysics, abstractions, platitudes, sweeping statements, etc., of which she vainly accuses her opponents.

We are discussing the program of the Marxists in *Russia, i.e.*, of the Marxists of all the nationalities in Russia. Should we not examine the position of the *ruling* classes of Russia?

The position of the "bureaucracy"* (we beg to be excused for this inexact term) and of the feudal landlords of the type of our United Nobility is well known. They categorically reject both equality of nationalities and the right to self-determination. They adhere to the old motto of the days of serfdom: autocracy, orthodoxy, the nation—the last term applying only to the Great-Russian nation. Even the Ukrainians have been declared to be "aliens," and even their language is being suppressed.

Let us glance at the Russian bourgeoisie, which was "called" to take part—a very modest part, it is true, but nevertheless some part—in the government, under the "June Third" legislative and administrative system. There is no need to dilate on the fact that the Octobrists are really following the Rights in this question. Unfortunately, some Marxists pay

* For reasons of the censorship Lenin here uses the term "bureaucracy" instead of "tsarism."—*Ed.*

much less attention to the position of the Great-Russian liberal bourgeoisie, the Progressives and the Cadets. And yet he who fails to study and ponder over this position will inevitably flounder in abstractions and unsupported statements in discussing the question of the right of nations to self-determination.

Skilled though it is in the art of diplomatically evading direct answers to "unpleasant" questions, *Rech*, the principal organ of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, was compelled, in its controversy with the *Pravda* last year, to make certain valuable admissions. The trouble started over the All-Ukraine Students' Congress that was held in Lvov in the summer of 1913. Mr. Mogilyansky, the sworn "Ukrainian expert" or Ukrainian correspondent of *Rech*, wrote an article in which he heaped the choicest invectives ("delirium," "adventurism," etc.) on the idea that the Ukraine should secede, which Dontsov, a Social-Nationalist, had advocated and the above-mentioned congress had approved.

Rabochaya Pravda,* in no way identifying itself with Mr. Dontsov and plainly declaring that he was a Social-Nationalist and that many Ukrainian Marxists did not agree with him, stated that the *tone* of *Rech*, or, rather, the way *it formulated the question in principle*, was improper and reprehensible for a Great-Russian democrat, or for any one desiring to pass as a democrat. Let *Rech* repudiate the Dontsovs if it likes, but from the standpoint of *principle*, a Great-Russian organ of democracy, as it claims to be, cannot be oblivious to *freedom* to secede, the *right* to secede.

A few months later Mr. Mogilyansky, having learned from the Ukrainian newspaper *Shlyakhi*, published in Lvov, of Mr. Dontsov's reply—in the course of which, incidentally, Dontsov had stated that "the chauvinist attacks in *Rech* have been properly branded [stigmatized?] only in the Russian Social-Democratic press," wrote an "explanation" in *Rech*, No. 331. This "explanation" consisted of the thrice repeated statement that "criticism of Mr. Dontsov's recipes" "does not mean rejection of the right of nations to self-determination."

"It must be said," wrote Mr. Mogilyansky, "that even 'the right of nations to self-determination' is not a fetish [hear! hear!!] that must not be criticized: morbid conditions in the life of nations may give rise to morbid tendencies in national self-determination, and the fact that these are brought to light does not mean that the right of nations to self-determination is rejected."

As you see, this Liberal's talk about a "fetish" is quite in keeping with Rosa Luxemburg's. It was obvious that Mr. Mogilyansky wanted to avoid giving a direct reply to the question: does he recognize the right to political self-determination, *i.e.*, to secession, or not?

*Proletarskaya Pravda*** (No. 4, of December 11, 1913) put this question *point-blank* to Mr. Mogilyansky and to the Constitutional-Democratic *Party*.

* "Workers' Pravda"—see note on p. 483—*Ed.*

** "Proletarian Pravda"—see note on p. 483.—*Ed.*

Rech, then (No. 340), published an unsigned, *i.e.*, an official editorial statement replying to this question. This reply can be reduced to the following three points:

1) Point 11 of the program of the Constitutional-Democratic Party speaks very definitely and clearly of "the right of nations to free *cultural* self-determination."

2) According to *Rech*, *Proletarskaya Pravda* "hopelessly confuses" self-determination with separatism, with the secession of particular nations.

3) "*Actually, the Constitutional-Democrats have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of 'nations to secede' from the Russian state.*" (See article, "National-Liberalism and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," in the *Proletarskaya Pravda*, No. 12, December 20, 1913.)

Let us first consider the second point of the statement in *Rech*. How vividly it shows the Semkovskys, the Liebmanns, the Yurkeviches and other opportunists that the hue and cry they have raised about the alleged "vagueness," or "indefiniteness," of the term "self-determination" is *in fact, i.e.*, from the standpoint of objective class relationships and the class struggle in Russia, a *mere repetition* of the utterances of the Liberal monarchist bourgeoisie!

Proletarskaya Pravda then put the following *three* questions to the enlightened "Constitutional-Democratic" gentlemen on *Rech*: (1) Do they deny that throughout the history of international democracy, especially since the middle of the nineteenth century, self-determination of nations has been taken to mean precisely political self-determination, the right to form an independent national state? (2) Do they deny that the well-known resolution adopted by the International Socialist Congress in London in 1896 has the same meaning? and (3) Do they deny that Plekhanov, in writing about self-determination as far back as 1902, meant precisely political self-determination? When *Proletarskaya Pravda* put these three questions, *the Cadets shut up*!!

Not a word did they say in reply, for they had nothing to say. They had tacitly to admit that *Proletarskaya Pravda* was absolutely right.

The outcries of the Liberals that the term "self-determination" is vague and that the Social-Democrats "hopelessly confuse" it with secession are nothing more than attempts to *confuse* the issue, to evade admitting a universally established democratic principle. If the Semkovskys, Liebmanns and Yurkeviches were not so ignorant, they would be ashamed to speak to the workers like *Liberals*.

But to proceed. *Proletarskaya Pravda* compelled *Rech* to admit that in the program of the Constitutional-Democrats the term "cultural" self-determination means in effect the *repudiation* of *political* self-determination.

"Actually, the Constitutional-Democrats have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of 'nations to secede' from the Russian state"—it was not without reason that the *Proletarskaya Pravda* recommended these words from *Rech* to the *Novoye Vremya* and the *Zemshchina* as an example of

the "loyalty" of our Cadets. Not missing the opportunity of mentioning the "Jews" and of making all kinds of caustic remarks at the expense of the Cadets, the *Novoye Vremya*, in its issue No. 13,563, nevertheless stated:

> "What is an axiom of political wisdom among the Social-Democrats" (*i.e.*, the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, to secession), "is, today, beginning to arouse differences of opinion even in Cadet circles."

By declaring that they "have never pledged themselves to advocate the right of nations to secede from the Russian state," the Cadets, in principle, have taken exactly the same position as the *Novoye Vremya*. This is precisely one of the principles of Cadet *National-Liberalism*, which makes them akin to the Purishkeviches, and is one of the causes of their political dependence, ideological and practical, on the latter. *Proletarskaya Pravda* wrote: "Messrs. the Cadets have studied history and are perfectly well aware of the 'pogrom-like,' to put it mildly, actions to which the exercise of the ancient right of the Purishkeviches to 'arrest and prevent'* has often led." Although they are perfectly well aware of the feudal source and nature of the omnipotence of the Purishkeviches, the Cadets, nevertheless, are taking their stand *on the basis* of the relations and frontiers created by this very class. Knowing perfectly well how much there is in the relations and frontiers created or fixed by this class that is un-European, anti-European (we would say Asiatic if this did not sound undeservedly, derogatory to the Japanese and Chinese), Messrs. the Cadets, nevertheless, accept them as the limit beyond which they dare not go.

Thus, they are adjusting themselves to the Purishkeviches, cringing to them, fearing to endanger their position, protecting them from the people's movement, from the democracy. As *Proletarskaya Pravda wrote*: "Actually this means that they are adjusting themselves to the interests of the feudal lords and to the worst nationalistic prejudices of the dominant nation instead of systematically combating these prejudices."

As men who are familiar with history and claim to be democrats, the Cadets do not even attempt to assert that the democratic movement which today characterizes Eastern Europe and Asia and is striving to change both on the model of the civilized capitalist countries, that this movement must leave intact the boundaries fixed by the feudal epoch, the epoch of the omnipotence of the Purishkeviches and the disfranchisement of wide strata of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

The fact that the question raised in the controversy between the *Proletarskaya Pravda* and *Rech* was not merely a literary question, but one that concerned a real political issue of the day, was proved, among other things,

* "To arrest and prevent" (literally in Russian "to drag and not to let")—the words are from Gleb Uspensky's story *The Police Station* depicting an over-zealous provincial policeman, Mymretsov, who with or without reason, would "drag" people to the police station, or "not let" them go where they wanted to.—*Ed.*

by the last conference of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, held in March 23-25, 1914. In the official report of this conference in *Rech* (No. 83, of March 26, 1914) we read:

> "A particularly lively discussion also took place on national problems. The Kiev deputies, who were supported by N. V. Nekrasov and A. M. Kolyubakin, pointed out that the national question is becoming an important factor that will have to be taken up more resolutely than hitherto. F. F. Kokoshkin pointed out, however" (this "however" is like Shchedrin's "but"—"The ears will never grow higher than the forehead, *never!*"), "that both the program and past political experience demand that 'elastic formulas' of 'political self-determination of nationalities' should be handled very carefully."

This highly remarkable line of reasoning at the Cadet conference deserves the serious attention of all Marxists and of all democrats. (We will note in parenthesis that the *Kievskaya Mysl* [*The Kiev Thought*], which is evidently very well informed and no doubt presents Mr. Kokoshkin's ideas correctly, added that he laid special stress, as a warning to his opponents, of course, on the danger of the "disintegration" of the state.)

The official report in *Rech* is composed with consummate diplomatic skill, so as to raise the curtain as little as possible and to conceal as much as possible. Yet, in the main, what happened at the Cadet conference is quite clear. The Liberal bourgeois delegates who were familiar with the state of affairs in the Ukraine, and the "Left" Cadets raised the question of *political* self-determination of nations. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for Mr. Kokoshkin to urge that this "formula" should be "handled carefully."

The Cadet program, with which, naturally, the delegates at the Cadet conference were familiar, speaks *not* of political but of "cultural" self-determination. Hence, Mr. Kokoshkin was *defending* the program *against* the Ukrainian delegates, *against* the Left Cadets; he was defending "cultural" self-determination *as against* "political" self-determination. It is quite obvious that in opposing "political" self-determination, in talking about the danger of the "disintegration of the state," in calling the formula "political self-determination" an "*elastic*" one (just as Rosa Luxemburg does!), Mr. Kokoshkin was defending Great-Russian National-Liberalism against the more "Left" or more democratic elements of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, and against the Ukrainian bourgeoisie.

Mr. Kokoshkin was victorious at the Cadet conference, as is evident from the treacherous little word "however" in the report in *Rech*. Great-Russian National-Liberalism has triumphed among the Cadets. Will not this victory help to clear the minds of those unwise individuals among the Marxists in Russia who, like the Cadets, have also begun to fear the "elastic formulas of political self-determination of nationalities"?

Let us, "however," examine the substance of Mr. Kokoshkin's line of

thought. By referring to "past political experience" (*i.e.*, evidently, the experience of 1905, when the Great-Russian bourgeoisie grew alarmed about its national privileges and infected the Cadet Party with its fears), and by talking about the danger of the "disintegration of the state," Mr. Kokoshkin showed that he understood perfectly well that political self-determination can mean nothing else than the right to secede and to form an independent national state. The question is: How should Mr. Kokoshkin's fears be appraised from the democratic standpoint in general, and from the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle in particular?

Mr. Kokoshkin wants to assure us that recognition of the right to secession would increase *the danger of the "disintegration of the state."* This is the viewpoint of Constable Mymretsov,* whose motto was: "arrest and prevent." From the democratic viewpoint, the very opposite is the case: recognition of the right to secession *reduces* the danger of the "disintegration of the state."

Mr. Kokoshkin argues exactly like the nationalists. At their last congress *they fiercely attacked the Ukrainian "Mazeppa-ites." The Ukrainian* movement, exclaimed Messrs. Savenko and Co., threatens to weaken the ties between the Ukraine and Russia; for by her Ukrainophilism Austria is strengthening her ties with Ukrainians!! Why Russia cannot try to "strengthen" her ties with the Ukrainians *by the same methods* that Messrs. the Savenkos blame Austria for using, *i.e.*, by granting the Ukrainians freedom to use their own language, self-government, an autonomous Diet etc., remains unexplained.

The arguments of the Savenkos and Kokoshkins are exactly alike, and they are equally ridiculous and absurd from the purely logical point of view. Is it not clear that the more liberty the Ukrainian nationality enjoys *in any particular country, the firmer will its ties with that country be?* One would think that this truism cannot be disputed unless one totally abandons all the premises of democracy. And can there be greater freedom of nationality, as such, than freedom to secede, freedom to form an independent national state?

To make this question, which has been so confused by the Liberals (and by those who echo them in their simplicity), a little clearer, we shall cite a very simple example. Let us take the question of divorce. In her article Rosa Luxemburg writes that the centralized democratic state, while conceding autonomy to its constituent parts, should retain the most important branches of legislation, including legislation on divorce, under the jurisdiction of the central parliament. The desire that the central authority *of the democratic state should have the power to grant freedom of divorce* is quite comprehensible. The reactionaries are opposed to freedom of divorce; they say that this must be "handled carefully," and loudly declare that it means the "disintegration of the family." The democrats, however,

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* *See footnote on* *p. 570.**—Ed.*

believe that the reactionaries are hypocrites, that actually, they are defending the omnipotence of the police and the bureaucracy, the privileges of one sex and the worst kind of oppression of women. They believe that freedom of divorce will not cause the "disintegration" of family ties but, on the contrary, will strengthen them on a democratic basis, which is the only possible and durable basis in civilized society.

To accuse the supporters of freedom of self-determination, *i.e.*, freedom to secede, of encouraging separatism, is as foolish and as hypocritical as accusing the advocates of freedom of divorce of wishing to destroy family ties. Just as in bourgeois society the defenders of privilege and corruption, on which bourgeois marriage rests oppose freedom of divorce, so, in the capitalist state, repudiation of the right to self-determination, *i.e.*, the right of nations to secede, is tantamount to defending the privileges of the dominating nation and police methods of administration as against democratic methods.

No doubt, the political corruption engendered by the relations prevailing in capitalist society, sometimes leads members of parliament and journalists to indulge in frivolous and even in just nonsensical twaddle about a particular nation seceding. But only reactionaries can allow themselves to be frightened (or pretend to be frightened) by such twaddle. Those who stand by democratic principles, *i.e.*, who insist that questions of state must be decided by the people, know very well that there is a very big difference between what the politicians prate about and what the people decide. The people know from daily experience the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantages of a big market and of a big state. They will, therefore, resort to secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder all economic intercourse. In that case, the interests of capitalist development and of the freedom of the class struggle will be best served by secession.

Thus, from whatever angle we approach Mr. Kokoshkin's arguments they prove to be absolutely absurd and a mockery of the principles of democracy. But there is a modicum of logic in these arguments, the logic of the class interests of the Great-Russian bourgeoisie. Like the majority of the members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Mr. Kokoshkin is a guardian of the moneybags of this bourgeoisie. He defends its privileges in general, and its *state* privileges in particular. He defends them hand in hand with Purishkevich, shoulder to shoulder with him, the only difference between them being that Purishkevich puts more faith in the feudal cudgel, while Kokoshkin and Co. realize that this cudgel was badly cracked in 1905, and rely more on bourgeois methods of deceiving the masses, such as frightening the philistines and the peasants with the spectre of the "disintegration of the state," deluding them with phrases about combining "national freedom" with the principles established by history, etc.

The Liberals' hostility to the principle of political self-determination of nations can have only one real class meaning, and that is, National-Liber-

alism, defence of the state privileges of the Great-Russian bourgeoisie. And the opportunists among the Marxists in Russia, who today, under the June Third regime, are strenuously opposing the right of nations to self-determination, the Liquidator Semkovsky, the Bundist Liebmann, the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois Yurkevich, are *actually* trailing behind the National-Liberals, corrupting the working class with National-Liberal ideas.

The interests of the working class and of its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand strong opposition to the nationalistic policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality. Hence, Social-Democrats would be equally running counter to proletarian policy and subordinating the workers to the policy of the bourgeoisie if they were to repudiate the right of nations to self-determination, *i.e.*, the right of an oppressed nation to secede, or if they were to support all the national demands of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations. It makes no difference to the wage worker whether he is exploited chiefly by the Great-Russian bourgeoisie rather than by the non-Russian bourgeoisie, or by the Polish bourgeoisie rather than the Jewish bourgeoisie, etc. The wage worker who understands his class interests is equally indifferent to the state privileges of the Great-Russian capitalists and to the promises of the Polish or Ukrainian capitalists to set up an earthly paradise when they obtain state privileges. Capitalism is developing *and will continue to develop, in one way or another, both in mixed states* and in separate national states.

In any case the wage workers will be exploited. And in order to be able to fight successfully against exploitation, the proletariat must be free of nationalism, must be absolutely neutral, so to speak, in the struggle for supremacy that is going on among the bourgeoisie of the various nations. If the proletariat of any one nation gives the slightest support to the privileges of "its" national bourgeoisie, this will inevitably rouse distrust among the proletariat of the other nation; it will weaken the international class solidarity of the workers and divide them, to the delight of the bourgeoisie. And repudiation of the right to self-determination, or secession, inevitably means, in practice, supporting the privileges of the dominating nation.

We will get even more striking confirmation of this if we take the concrete case of the secession of Norway from Sweden.

VI. THE SECESSION OF NORWAY FROM SWEDEN

Rosa Luxemburg cites this example and discusses it in the following way:

> "The latest event in the history of federative relations, the secession of Norway from Sweden—which at the time was hastily caught up by the social-patriotic Polish press (see the Cracow *Naprzód* [*Forward*]) as a gratifying sign of the strength and progressive nature of the aspirations for state separation—at once provided striking

proof that federalism and its concomitant separation are not an expression of progress or democracy. After the so-called Norwegian 'revolution,' which meant that the Swedish king was deposed and compelled to leave Norway, the Norwegians very calmly chose another king, formally rejecting, by a national referendum, the proposal to establish a republic. What the superficial admirers of all national movements and all semblance of independence proclaimed as a 'revolution' was simply a manifestation of peasant and petty-bourgeois particularism, the desire to have their 'own' king for their money instead of one foisted upon them by the Swedish aristocracy, and consequently, was a movement that had nothing to do with revolution. At the same time, the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway showed once again to what extent, in this case too, federation, which had existed until then, was only an expression of purely dynastic interests and, therefore, merely a form of monarchism and reaction. . . ." (*Przegląd.*)

That is literally all that Rosa Luxemburg has to say on this subject!! It must be confessed that it would have been difficult for Rosa Luxemburg to have revealed the hopelessness of her position more vividly than she has done in this case.

The question was, and is, whether the Social-Democrats in a mixed national state need a program that recognizes the right to self-determination or to secession.

What does the example of Norway, cited by Rosa Luxemburg herself, tell us on this point?

Our author twists and turns, exercises her wit and rails at *Naprzód,* but she does not answer the question!! Rosa Luxemburg speaks about everything under the sun so as *to avoid saying a single word* about the actual point at issue!!

Undoubtedly, in wishing to have their own king for their money, and in rejecting, in a national referendum, the proposal to establish a republic the Norwegian petty bourgeoisie displayed exceedingly bad philistine taste. Undoubtedly, *Naprzód* displayed equally bad and equally philistine taste by failing to notice this.

But what has all this to do with the case??

The question under discussion was the right of nations to self-determination and the attitude the Socialist proletariat should adopt towards this right! Why, then, does not Rosa Luxemburg answer this question instead of skirting around it?

It is said that in the eyes of a mouse there is no animal stronger than the cat. In Rosa Luxemburg's eyes there is evidently no animal stronger than the "Fraki." "Fraki" is the popular term for the "Polish Socialist Party," the so-called revolutionary faction, and the Cracow newspaper, the *Naprzód,* shares the views of this "faction." Rosa Luxemburg is so blinded

by her fight against the nationalism of this "faction" that everything except the *Naprzód* drops out of sight.

If the *Naprzód* says "yes," Rosa Luxemburg considers it her bounden duty immediately to say "no," without stopping to think that by doing so she does not show that she is independent of the *Naprzód*, but on the contrary, she shows that she is ludicrously dependent on the "Fraki," that she is unable to see things from a somewhat deeper and broader viewpoint than that of the Cracow ant-hill. The *Naprzód*, of course, is a wretched, and by no means a Marxian organ; but this should not prevent us from properly analysing the example of Norway, once we have chosen it.

To analyse this example in a Marxian way, we must deal, not with the vices of the awfully terrible "Fraki," but, firstly, with the concrete historical features of the secession of Norway from Sweden, and, secondly, with the tasks the *proletariat* of both countries was confronted with in connection with this secession.

The geographic, economic and language ties between Norway and Sweden are no less close than those between the Great Russians and many other Slav nations. But the union between Norway and Sweden was not a voluntary one, so that Rosa Luxemburg's reference to "federation" is quite beside the point, and she had recourse to it simply because she did not know what to say. Norway was *ceded* to Sweden by the monarchs during the Napoleonic wars, against the will of the Norwegians; and the Swedes had to send troops into Norway to subjugate her.

Despite the exceptionally extensive autonomy which Norway enjoyed (she had her own parliament, etc.), for many decades after the union there was constant friction between Norway and Sweden, and the Norwegians tried to throw off the yoke of the Swedish aristocracy. At last, in August 1905, they succeeded: the Norwegian parliament resolved that the Swedish king was no longer king of Norway, and in the referendum held later among the Norwegian people, the overwhelming majority (about 200,000 as against a few hundred) voted for complete separation from Sweden. After a short period of indecision, the Swedes resigned themselves to the fact of secession.

This example shows us on what grounds cases of the secession of nations are possible, and actually occur, under the modern economic and political relations, and the *form* secession sometimes assumes under conditions of political freedom and democracy.

Not a single Social-Democrat, unless he wants to profess that political freedom and democracy are matters of indifference to him (and in that case he would naturally cease to be a Social-Democrat), can deny that this example is *practical* proof that it is the *bounden duty* of class-conscious workers to conduct systematic propaganda and prepare the ground for the settlement of conflicts that may arise over the secession of nations not in the "Russian way," but *only in the way* they were settled in 1905 between Norway and Sweden. This is exactly what the demand in the program for the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination means. But

Rosa Luxemburg tried to get round a fact that was repugnant to her theory by severely attacking the philistinism of the Norwegian philistines and the Cracow *Naprzód*; for she understood perfectly well that this historical fact *utterly refutes* her contention that the right to self-determination of nations is a "utopia," that it is like the right "to eat from gold plates," etc. Such phrases only express a smug, opportunist faith in the immutability of the present alignment of forces among the nationalities of Eastern Europe.

Let us proceed further. In the question of the self-determination of nations, as in every other question, we are interested, first and foremost, in the self-determination of the proletariat within a given nation. Rosa Luxemburg modestly evaded this question too, for she realized that an analysis of it on the basis of the example of Norway, which she herself chose, would be disastrous for her "theory."

What position did the Norwegian and Swedish proletariat take, and have to take, in the conflict over secession? *After* Norway seceded, the class-conscious workers of Norway would naturally vote for a republic,* and if some Socialists voted otherwise it only goes to show how much stupid, philistine opportunism there sometimes is in the European Socialist movement. There can be no two opinions about that, and we mention this point only because Rosa Luxemburg is trying to obscure the issue by speaking *beside the point.* We do not know whether the Norwegian Socialist program made it obligatory for Norwegian Social-Democrats to hold a particular view on the question of secession. We will assume that it did not, that the Norwegian Socialists left it an open question as to whether the autonomy of Norway gave sufficient scope for freely waging the class struggle, or whether eternal friction and conflicts with the Swedish aristocracy hindered the freedom of economic life. But the fact that it was the duty of the Norwegian proletariat to oppose this aristocracy and to support Norwegian peasant democracy (even with all its philistine limitations) cannot be disputed.

And what about the Swedish proletariat? It is common knowledge that the Swedish landlords, abetted by the Swedish clergy, advocated war against Norway. And since Norway was much weaker than Sweden, since it had already experienced a Swedish invasion and since the Swedish aristocracy carries enormous weight in its own country, this advocacy of war gave rise to a great danger. We may be sure that the Swedish Kokoshkins spent much time and energy in trying to corrupt the minds of the Swedish people by appeals to "handle carefully" the "elastic formulas of political self-determination of nations," by painting horrible pictures of the danger of the "disintegration of the state" and by assuring them that "national free-

* If the majority of the Norwegian nation had been in favour of a monarchy while the proletariat had wanted a republic, then, generally speaking, the Norwegian proletariat would have been confronted with the alternative: either revolution, if conditions were ripe for it, or subordination to the will of the majority and prolonged propaganda and agitation work.

dom" was compatible with the principles of the Swedish aristocracy. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Swedish Social-Democrats would have betrayed the cause of Socialism and the cause of democracy if they had not fought hard to combat the landlord and "Kokoshkin" ideology and policy, and if they had not demanded *not only* equality of nations in general (to which the Kokoshkins also subscribe) but also the right of nations to self-determination, Norway's freedom to secede.

The fact that the Swedish workers recognized the right of the Norwegians to secede served to *strengthen* the fraternal class solidarity and unity of the Norwegian and Swedish workers. For this convinced the Norwegian workers that the Swedish workers were not infected with Swedish nationalism, that they placed fraternity with the Norwegian proletarians above the privileges of the Swedish bourgeoisie and aristocracy. The dissolution of the ties that had been foisted upon Norway by the monarchs of Europe and the Swedish aristocracy strengthened the ties between the Norwegian and Swedish workers. The Swedish workers proved that in spite of *all* the vicissitudes of bourgeois policy—bourgeois relations may quite possibly cause a repetition of the forcible subjection of the Norwegians to the Swedes!—they will be able to preserve and defend the complete equality and class solidarity of the workers of both nations in the fight against both the Swedish and the Norwegian bourgeoisie.

Incidentally, this reveals how groundless and even frivolous are the attempts the "Fraki" sometimes make to "use" our disagreements with Rosa Luxemburg against the Polish Social-Democrats. The "Fraki" are not proletarian, and not a Socialist, but a petty-bourgeois nationalist party, something like Polish Social-Revolutionaries. There never has been, nor *could there be any question of unity between the Russian Social-Democrats* and this party. On the other hand, not a single Russian Social-Democrat has ever "repented" of the close relations and unity that have been established with the Polish Social-Democrats. The Polish Social-Democrats have rendered great historical service by creating the first really Marxist, really proletarian party in Poland, a country which is thoroughly imbued with nationalistic aspirations and passions. But the service the Polish Social-Democrats have rendered is a great one not because Rosa Luxemburg has talked a lot of nonsense about point 9 of the Russian Marxian program, but despite this sad circumstance.

The question of the "right to self-determination," of course, is not so important for the Polish Social-Democrats as it is for the Russians. It is quite understandable that in their zeal (sometimes a little excessive, perhaps) to combat the nationalistically blinded petty bourgeoisie of Poland the Polish Social-Democrats should "overdo" it. No Russian Marxist ever thought of blaming the Polish Social-Democrats for being opposed to the secession of Poland. These Social-Democrats err only when, like Rosa Luxemburg, they try to deny the necessity of including the recognition of the right to self-determination in the program of the *Russian* Marxists.

Virtually, this is like attempting to apply what is suitable when measured by Cracow standards to all the peoples and nations inhabiting Russia, including the Great Russians. It means being "Polish nationalists inside out" and not Russian, not international Social-Democrats.

For international Social-Democracy stands for the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. This is what we shall now proceed to discuss.

VII. THE RESOLUTION OF THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, 1896

This resolution reads:

> "The Congress declares that it upholds the full right of self-determination [*Selbstbestimmungsrecht*] of all nations and expresses its sympathy for the workers of every country now suffering under the yoke of military, national or other despotism; the Congress calls on the workers of all these countries to join the ranks of the class-conscious [*Klassenbewusste*=those who understand their class interests] workers of the whole world and to fight shoulder to shoulder with them for the defeat of international capitalism and for the achievement of the aims of international Social-Democracy."*

As we have already pointed out, our opportunists, Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebmann and Yurkevich, are simply unaware of this resolution. But Rosa Luxemburg is aware of it and quotes the full text, which contains the same expression as that contained in our program, "self-determination."

The question is how does Rosa Luxemburg remove this obstacle which lies in the path of her "original" theory?

Oh, quite simply ... the whole emphasis lies in the second part of the resolution ... its declaratory character ... one would refer to it only under a misapprehension!!

The helplessness and perplexity of our author are simply astounding. Usually, only the opportunists argue that the consistent democratic and Socialist points in the program are merely declarations, and cravenly avoid an open debate on these points. Not without reason, apparently, has Rosa Luxemburg found herself this time in the deplorable company of Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebmann and Yurkevich. Rosa Luxemburg does not venture

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* See the official German report of the London Congress: "*Verhandlungen und Beschlüsse des internationalen sozialistischen Arbeiter- und Gewerkschafts-Kongresses zu London, vom 27. Juli bis 1. August 1896.*" Berlin, 1897, S. 18. (*Proceedings and Decisions of the International Socialist Labour and Trade Union Congress, held in London, July 27 to August 1, 1896*, Berlin, 1897, p. 18.—*Ed*) A Russian pamphlet has been published containing the decisions of International Congresses, in which the word "self-determination" is wrongly translated as "autonomy."

to state openly whether she regards the above resolution as correct or erroneous. She wriggles and twists as if counting on the inattentive or ill-informed reader who forgets the first part of the resolution by the time he has started reading the second, or who has never heard of the discussion that took place in the Socialist press *prior to* the London Congress.

However, Rosa Luxemburg is greatly mistaken if she imagines that she can so easily, before the class-conscious workers of Russia, trample upon the resolution of the International on such an important question of principle without even deigning to analyse it critically.

Rosa Luxemburg's point of view was voiced during the discussions which took place prior to the London Congress, mainly in the columns of *Die Neue Zeit*, the organ of the German Marxists, *and this point of view was virtually rejected by the International!* That is the crux of the matter, which the Russian reader particularly must bear in mind.

The debate turned on the question of the independence of Poland. Three points of view were advanced:

1. The point of view of the "Fraki," on whose behalf Hecker spoke. They wanted the International to include in *its* program the demand for the independence of Poland. This proposal was not accepted. This point of view was rejected by the International.

2. Rosa Luxemburg's point of view, *viz.*, that the Polish Socialists must *not demand the independence of Poland. This point of view entirely* precluded the proclamation of the right of nations to self-determination. This point of view was likewise rejected by the International.

3. The point of view which was then most comprehensively expounded by K. Kautsky in opposing Rosa Luxemburg, when he proved that her materialism was extremely "one-sided." According to this point of view, the International cannot at the present time make the independence of Poland a point in its program; but the Polish Socialists—said Kautsky—are fully entitled to advance such a demand. From the point of view of the Socialists, it is absolutely a mistake to ignore the tasks of national liberation in a situation where national oppression exists.

The resolution of the International reproduces the most essential, the fundamental propositions of this point of view: on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unequivocal recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination; on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for *international* unity in their class struggle.

We think that this resolution is absolutely correct, and that for the countries of Eastern Europe and Asia in the beginning of the twentieth century it is precisely this resolution, in both its parts taken as an inseparable whole, that gives the only correct lead to the proletarian class policy in the national question.

We will deal with the three above-mentioned points of view in somewhat greater detail.

It is well known that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels considered that

it was the bounden duty of the whole of West European democracy, and still more of Social-Democracy, actively to support the demand for the independence of Poland. For the period of the 1840's, and 1860's, the period of the bourgeois revolutions in Austria and Germany, and the period of the "Peasant Reform" in Russia, this point of view was quite correct and the only one that was consistently democratic and proletarian. So long as the masses of the people in Russia, and in most of the Slavic countries, were still dormant, so long as *there were no* independent, mass, democratic movements in these countries, the *aristocratic* liberation movement in Poland assumed immense, paramount importance from the point of view, not only of Russian, not only of Slavic, but of European democracy as a whole.*

But while this standpoint of Marx was correct for the sixties or for the third quarter of the nineteenth century, it has ceased to be correct in the twentieth century. Independent democratic movements, and even an independent proletarian movement, have arisen in most Slavic countries, even in one of the most backward Slavic countries, Russia. Aristocratic Poland has disappeared, yielding place to capitalist Poland. Under such circumstances Poland could not but lose its *exceptional* revolutionary importance.

The attempt of the P.P.S. (the Polish Socialist Party, the present-day "Fraki") in 1896 to "fix" for all time the point of view Marx held in a *different epoch* was an attempt to use the *letter* of Marxism against the *spirit* of Marxism. Therefore, the Polish Social-Democrats were quite right when they attacked the extreme nationalism of the Polish petty bourgeoisie and pointed out that the national question was of secondary importance for Polish workers, when they for the first time created a purely proletarian party in Poland and proclaimed the extremely important principle that the Polish and the Russian workers must maintain the closest alliance in their class struggle.

But did this mean that at the beginning of the twentieth century the International could regard the principle of political self-determination of nations, or the right to secession, as superfluous for Eastern Europe and for Asia? This would have been the height of absurdity, and (theoretically) tantamount to admitting that the bourgeois-democratic reformation of the Turkish, Russian and Chinese states has been consummated, would have been tantamount (in effect) to opportunism towards despotism.

No. During the period of incipient bourgeois-democratic revolutions in

* It would be a very interesting piece of historical research to compare the position of a Polish aristocrat-rebel in 1863 with that of the Russian democrat-revolutionary, Chernyshevsky, who, too (like Marx), knew how to appraise the importance of the Polish movement, and with that of the Ukrainian petty bourgeois Dragomanov, who appeared much later and expressed the point of view of a peasant, so ignorant, so sleepy and attached so fast to his dung-heap, that his legitimate hatred of the Polish aristocracy prevented him from understanding the significance of their struggle for all-Russian democracy. (See Dragomanov, *Historical Poland and Pan-Russian Democracy*.) Dragomanov richly deserved the fervent kisses which were subsequently bestowed on him by Mr. P. B. Struve, who by that time had become a National-Liberal.

Eastern Europe and Asia, during the period of the awakening and intensification of national movements, during the period of formation of independent proletarian parties, the task of these parties in connection with national policy must be twofold: First, to recognize the right to self-determination for all nations, because the bourgeois-democratic reformation is not yet consummated, because working-class democracy consistently, seriously and sincerely, and not in a Liberal, Kokoshkin fashion, fights for equal rights for nations, and second, to maintain the closest, inseparable alliance in the class struggle of the proletarians of all nations in a given state, throughout all the vicissitudes of its history, irrespective of any reshaping of the frontiers of the individual states by the bourgeoisie.

It is precisely this twofold task of the proletariat that the resolution of the International of 1896 formulates. And this is the substance, the underlying principle, of the resolution adopted by the Conference of Russian Marxists held in the summer of 1913. Some people profess to see a "contradiction" in the fact that while point 4 of this resolution, which recognizes the right to self-determination, to secession, seems to "concede" the maximum to nationalism (in reality the recognition of the *right* of *all* nations to self-determination implies the recognition of the maximum of *democracy* and the minimum of nationalism), point 5 warns the workers against the nationalistic slogans of the bourgeoisie of any nation and demands the unity and fusion of the workers of all nations into internationally united proletarian organizations. But this "contradiction" is apparent only to extremely shallow minds which cannot grasp, for instance, why the unity and class solidarity of the Swedish and the Norwegian proletariat were *strengthened* when the Swedish workers upheld Norway's freedom to secede and form an independent state.

VIII. KARL MARX THE UTOPIAN AND PRACTICAL ROSA LUXEMBURG

While declaring the independence of Poland to be a "utopia" and repeating it *ad nauseam*, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

Evidently, "practical" Rosa Luxemburg is unaware of Karl Marx's attitude to the question of the independence of Ireland. It is worth while dwelling upon this, in order to show how a *definite* demand for national independence was analysed from a really Marxian and not an opportunist standpoint.

It was Marx's custom to "probe the teeth," as he expressed it, of his Socialist acquaintances, testing their intelligence and the strength of their convictions. Having made the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels on July 5, 1870, expressing a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian Socialist but adding at the same time:

> "... *Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say, an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

Marx questions a Socialist belonging to an oppressing nation about his attitude to the oppressed nation and he at once reveals the defect *common* to the Socialists of the dominant nations (the British and the Russian): they fail to understand their Socialist duties towards the downtrodden nations, they echo the prejudices of the "Great Power" bourgeoisie.

Before passing on to Marx's positive declarations on Ireland, we must point out that in general the attitude of Marx and Engels to the national question was strictly critical, and that they recognized its historically relative importance. Thus, Engels wrote to Marx on May 23, 1851, that the study of history was leading him to pessimistic conclusions concerning Poland, that the importance of Poland was temporary, that it would last only until the agrarian revolution in Russia. The role of the Poles in history was one of "brave, quarrelsome stupidity."

> "And one cannot point to a single instance in which Poland represented progress successfully, even if only in relation to Russia, or did anything at all of historic importance." Russia contains more elements of civilization, education, industry and of the bourgeoisie than the "Poles, whose whole nature is that of the idle cavalier.... What are Warsaw and Cracow compared to St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, etc.!"

Engels had no faith in the success of an insurrection of the Polish aristocracy.

But all these thoughts, so full of genius and penetration, by no means prevented Engels and Marx from treating the Polish movement with the most profound and ardent sympathy twelve years later, when Russia was still dormant and Poland was seething.

When drafting the Address of the International in 1864, Marx wrote to Engels (on November 4, 1864) that he had to combat Mazzini's nationalism, and went on to say:

> "In so far as international politics come into the Address, I speak of countries, not of nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the lesser nations."

Marx had no doubt as to the subordinate position of the national question as compared with the "labour question." But his theory is as far from ignoring the national question as heaven from earth.

1866 arrives. Marx writes to Engels about the "Proudhonist clique" in Paris which

> "... declares nationalities to be an absurdity and attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi. As polemics against chauvinism their tactics

are useful and explicable. But when the believers in Proudhon (my good friends here, Lafargue and Longuet also belong to them) think that all Europe can and should sit quietly and peacefully on its behind until the gentlemen in France abolish *poverty and ignorance* ... they become ridiculous." (Letter of June 7, 1866.)

"Yesterday," Marx writes on June 20, "there was a discussion in the International Council on the present war.... The discussion wound up, as was to be expected, with 'the question of nationality' in general and the attitude we should take towards it.... The representatives of 'Young France' (*non-workers*) came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices.' Proudhonised Stirnerism.... The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution.... The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue, etc., who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, *i.e.*, a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption into the model French nation."

The conclusion that follows from all these critical remarks of Marx is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, *viz.*, recognizing "one's own" as the "model nation" (or, we will add, as the nation possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).*

But let us return to the question of Ireland.

Marx's position on this question is most clearly expressed in the following extracts from his letters:

> "I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the British workers in favour of Fenianism.... I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable. although after the separation there may come *federation*."

This is what Marx wrote to Engels on November 2, 1867.

In his letter of November 30 of the same year he added:

> "...what shall we advise the *English* workers? In my opinion they must make the *repeal of the Union*" [*i.e.*, the separation of Ireland from Great Britain] "(in short, the affair of 1783, only democratized

* See also Marx's letter to Engels of June 3, 1867: "...I have learned with real pleasure from the Paris letters to the *Times* about the pro-Polish sentiments of the Parisians as against Russia.... M. Proudhon and his little doctrinaire clique are not the French people."

and adapted to the conditions of the time) into an article of their *pronunziamento*. This is the only *legal* and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the program of an *English* party. Experience must show later whether a purely personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries....

"What the Irish need is:

"1) Self-government and independence from England;

"2) An agrarian revolution...."

Marx attached great importance to the question of Ireland and he delivered lectures of one-and-a-half-hours' duration at the German Workers' Union on this subject (letter of December 17, 1867).

Engels notes in a letter of November 20, 1868, "the hatred for the Irish among the British workers," and almost a year later (October 24, 1869), returning to this question he writes:

"*Il n'y a qu'un pas*" (it is only one step) "from Ireland to Russia...." "Irish history shows one how disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation. All the abominations of the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to work through the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England but for the necessity for military rule in Ireland and the creation of a new aristocracy there."

Let us note, by the way, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"In Posen ... the Polish workers ... have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a very different way of getting rid of national prejudices from that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declamations."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx writes to Engels that he spoke for an hour and a quarter in the Council of the International on the question of the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish amnesty and proposed the following resolutions:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots ... Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

"that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

"that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slave-holders' rebellion, he

now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

"that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish amnesty question are the true and genuine offspring of that *'policy of conquest,'* by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

"that the *General Council* of the *'International Workingmen's Association'* express their admiration of the spirited, firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their amnesty movement;

"that these resolutions be communicated to all branches of, and workingmen's bodies connected with, the *'International Workingmen's Association'* in Europe and America."

On December 10, 1869, Marx writes that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International will be framed on the following lines:

"... quite apart from all phrases about 'international' and 'humane' *justice for Ireland*—which are to be taken for granted in the *International Council—it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland.* And this is my most complete conviction, and for reasons which in part I cannot tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working-class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in *The New York Tribune* [an American journal to which *Marx contributed for a long time]. Deeper study has now convinced* me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* before it has got rid of Ireland.... English reaction in England had its roots ... in the subjugation of Ireland." (Marx's italics.)

Marx's policy on the Irish question should now be quite clear to the readers.

Marx, the "utopian," was so "impractical" that he stood for the separation of Ireland, which has not been realized even half a century later. What gave rise to Marx's policy, and was it not a mistake?

At first Marx thought that Ireland would be liberated not by the national movement of the oppressed nation, but by the labour movement of the oppressing nation. Marx did not make an absolute of the national movement, knowing, as he did, that the victory of the working class alone can bring about the complete *liberation of all nationalities. It is impossible* to estimate beforehand all the possible correlations between the bourgeois liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressing nation (the very problem which today makes the national question in Russia so difficult).

However, matters turned out so that the English working class fell under the influence of the Liberals for a fairly long time, became an appendage of the Liberals and by adopting a Liberal-Labour policy rendered itself effete. The bourgeois liberation movement in Ireland grew stronger and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx reconsidered his view and corrected it. "How disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation." The English working class will never be free until Ireland is freed from the English yoke. Reaction in England is strengthened and fostered by the enslavement of Ireland (just as reaction in Russia is fostered by her enslavement of a number of nations!).

And Marx, in proposing in the International a resolution of sympathy with "the Irish nation," "the Irish people" (the clever L.VI. would probably have berated poor Marx for forgetting about the class struggle!), advocates the *separation* of Ireland from England, "although after the separation there may come *federation*."

What were the theoretical grounds for Marx's conclusion? In England the bourgeois revolution had been consummated long ago. But it had not yet been consummated in Ireland; it is being consummated now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the English Liberals. If capitalism had been overthrown in England as quickly as Marx at first expected, there would have been no room for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it had arisen, Marx advised the English workers to support it, to give it a revolutionary impetus and lead it to a final issue in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and England in the 1860's were, of course, even closer than Russia's present ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "impracticability" and "impossibility" of the separation of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and England's immense colonial power) were quite obvious. While, in principle, an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance agrees also to federation,* *so long as* the emancipation of Ireland is achieved in a revolutionary and not in a reformist way, through the movement of the mass of the people of Ireland supported by the working class of England. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would be in the best interests of the proletariat and most favourable for rapid social development.

Things turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the English

* By the way, it is not difficult to see why, from a Social-Democratic point of view the right of "self-determination" means *neither* federation *nor* autonomy. (Although, speaking in the abstract, both come under the category of "self-determination.") The right to federation is, in general, an absurdity, since federation is a two-sided contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot place the defence of federalism in general in their program. As far as autonomy is concerned, Marxists defend not "the right to" autonomy but autonomy *itself*, as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a mixed national composition, with sharp differences in geographical and other conditions. Consequently, the recognition of the "right of nations to autonomy" is as absurd as the "right of nations to federation."

proletariat proved to be weak. Only now, through the miserable deals between the English Liberals and the Irish bourgeoisie, is the Irish problem *being solved* (the example of Ulster shows with what difficulty) through the land reform (with compensation) and autonomy (not introduced so far). Well then? Does it follow that Marx and Engels were "utopians," that they advanced "impossible" national demands, that they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Irish petty-bourgeois nationalists (there is no doubt about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Fenian movement), etc.?

No. In the Irish question too Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really educated the masses in the spirit of democracy and Socialism. Only such a policy could have saved both Ireland and England from half a century of delay in the introduction of the necessary reforms, and could have prevented these reforms from being mutilated by the Liberals to please the reactionaries.

The policy of Marx and Engels in the Irish question serves as a splendid example (which retains immense *practical* importance to the present time) of the attitude the proletariat of the oppressing nations should adopt towards national movements. It serves as a warning against that "servile haste" with which the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to declare "utopian" the idea of changing the frontiers of states that have been established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation.

If the Irish and English proletariat had not accepted Marx's policy, and had not taken the separation of Ireland as their slogan, they would have displayed the worst sort of opportunism; they would have shown that they were oblivious to their duties as democrats and Socialists, and would have yielded to *English* reaction and to the *English* bourgeoisie.

IX. THE 1903 PROGRAM AND ITS LIQUIDATORS

Copies of the Minutes of the 1903 Congress, at which the program of the Russian Marxists was adopted, have become a rarity, so that the overwhelming majority of the active workers in the labour movement today are unacquainted with the motives that underlie the various points of the program (the more so since not all the literature relevant thereto enjoys the blessings of legality...). It is therefore necessary to analyse the debate that took place at the 1903 Congress on the question that interests us.

Let us state first of all that however meagre the Russian Social-Democratic literature on the "right of nations to self-determination" may be, it, nevertheless, clearly shows that this right was always understood to mean the right to secession. The Semkovskys, Liebmanns and Yurkeviches, who doubt this and declare that point 9 is "vague," etc., do so only because of their extreme ignorance or carelessness. As far back as 1902, Plekhanov, in *Zarya*, defending "the right to self-determination" in the draft program,

wrote that this demand, while not obligatory for the bourgeois democrats, is "*obligatory* for the Social-Democrats."

> "If we were to forget or hesitate to advance it," wrote Plekhanov, "for fear of offending the national prejudices of the present generation of the Great Russians, the call ... 'workers of all countries, unite!' on our lips would become a brazen lie. . . ."

This is a very apt characterization of the fundamental argument in favour of the point under consideration; so apt that it is not surprising that the critics of our program who have "forgotten their kin" have been timidly avoiding it. The renunciation of this point, no matter for what motives, is *really* a "shameful" concession to *Great-Russian* nationalism. But why Great-Russian, when it is a question of the right of *all* nations to self-determination? Because it refers to secession *from* the Great Russians. In the interests of the *unity of the proletarians,* in the interests of their class solidarity, we must recognize the right of *nations* to *secession*—that is what Plekhanov admitted in the words quoted above fourteen years ago. Had our opportunists pondered over this they would probably not have talked so much nonsense about self-determination.

At the 1903 Congress, which adopted the draft program that Plekhanov advocated, the main work was done in the *Program Commission.* Unfortunately, no minutes were taken; they would have been particularly interesting on this point, for it was *only* in the Commission that the representatives of the Polish Social-Democrats, Warszawski and Hanecki, tried to defend their view and to dispute the "recognition of the right to self-determination." The reader who took the trouble to compare their arguments (expounded in the speech by Warszawski and in his and Hanecki's declaration, pp. 134-36 and 388-90 of the Congress Minutes) with those Rosa Luxemburg advanced in her Polish article, which we have analysed, would find that they are quite identical.

How were these arguments treated by the Program Commission of the Second Congress, where Plekhanov, more than anyone else, attacked the Polish Marxists? These arguments were mercilessly ridiculed! The absurdity of proposing to the Marxists *of Russia* that they delete the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination was demonstrated so clearly and vividly that the Polish Marxists *did not even venture to repeat their arguments at the full meeting of the Congress*!! Convinced of the hopelessness of their case at the supreme assembly of Great-Russian, Jewish, Georgian and Armenian Marxists, they left the Congress.

This historic episode is naturally of very great importance for everyone who is seriously interested in *his* program. The fact that the arguments of the Polish Marxists suffered utter defeat in the Program Commission of the Congress, and that the Polish Marxists gave up the attempt to defend their views at the full meeting of the Congress is very significant. It is not without reason that Rosa Luxemburg "modestly" kept silent about it in her

article in 1908; apparently the recollection of the Congress was too unpleasant! She also kept quiet about the ridiculously inept proposal made by Warszawski and Hanecki in 1903, on behalf of all the Polish Marxists, to "amend" point 9 of the program, a proposal which neither Rosa Luxemburg nor the other Polish Social-Democrats have ventured (or will venture) to repeat.

But although Rosa Luxemburg, concealing her defeat in 1903, kept quiet about these facts, those who take an interest in the history of their Party will take pains to ascertain the facts and ponder over their significance.

On leaving the 1903 Congress Rosa Luxemburg's friends submitted the following statement: "...We propose that point 7" (now point 9) "of the draft program read as follows: Point 7. *Institutions guaranteeing full freedom of cultural development to all nations incorporated in the state.*" (P. 390 of the Minutes.)

Thus, the Polish Marxists then propounded views on the national question that were so vague that *instead of* self-determination they actually proposed the notorious "cultural-national autonomy," under another name.

This sounds almost incredible, but unfortunately it is a fact. At the Congress itself, although it was attended by five Bundists with five votes, and three Caucasians with six votes, not counting Kostrov's consulting voice, not a *single* vote was cast for the *deletion* of the point about self-determination. Three votes were cast for the proposal to add to this point "cultural-national autonomy" (in favour of Goldblatt's formula: "the establishment of institutions guaranteeing to the nations complete freedom of cultural development") and four votes for Lieber's formula ("the right of nations to freedom in their cultural development").

Now that a Russian Liberal party, the Constitutional-Democratic Party, has appeared on the scene, we know that in *its* program the political self-determination of nations has been replaced by "cultural self-determination." Thus, Rosa Luxemburg's Polish friends were so successful in "*combating*" the nationalism of the P.P.S. that they proposed to substitute a *Liberal* program for the Marxian program! And in the same breath they accused our program of being opportunist; no wonder this accusation was received with laughter in the Program Commission of the Second Congress!

How was "self-determination" understood by the delegates at the Second Congress, of whom, as we have seen, *not a single one* was opposed to "self-determination of nations"?

The following three extracts from the minutes provide the answer:

"*Martynov* is of the opinion that the term 'self-determination' should not be given a broad interpretation; it merely means the right of a nation to set itself up as a separate political entity and not regional self-government." (P. 171.)

Martynov was a member of the Program Commission in which the arguments of Rosa Luxemburg's friends were repudiated and ridiculed. Martynov was then "an Economist," a rabid opponent of *Iskra*; and had he

expressed an opinion which was not shared by the majority of the Program Commission he would certainly have been repudiated.

Goldblatt, a Bundist, was the first to speak when the Congress, after the Commission had finished its work, discussed point 8 (present point 9) of the program.

Goldblatt said:

> "Nothing can be said against the 'right to self-determination.' When a nation is fighting for independence, it should not be opposed. If Poland refuses to enter into legal marriage with Russia, she should not be compelled to, as Plekhanov put it. I agree with this opinion within these limits." (Pp. 175-76.)

Plekhanov did not speak at all on this subject at the full meeting of the Congress. Goldblatt repeated what Plekhanov had said in the Program Commission, where the "right to self-determination" had been explained in a simple and detailed manner to mean the right to secession. Lieber, who spoke after Goldblatt, remarked:

> "Of course, if any nationality finds that it cannot live within the frontiers of Russia, the Party will not place any obstacles in its way." (P. 176.)

The reader will see that at the Second Congress of the Party, which adopted the program, there were no two opinions about self-determination meaning "only" the right to secession. Even the Bundists assimilated this truth at that time, and only in our deplorable times of continued counter-revolution and all sorts of "apostasy" can we find people who, bold in their ignorance, declare that the program is "vague." But before devoting time to these sorry "quasi-Social-Democrats," let us first finish with the attitude of the Poles to the program.

They came to the Second Congress (1903) declaring that unity was necessary and urgent. But they left the Congress after their "reverse" in the Program Commission, and their *last word* was their written statement, printed in the minutes of the Congress, containing the above-mentioned proposals to *substitute* cultural-national autonomy for self-determination.

In 1906 the Polish Marxists joined the Party, and neither upon joining nor afterwards (neither at the Congress of 1907, nor at the conferences of 1907 and 1908, nor at the plenum of 1910) *did they once introduce* a single proposal to amend point 9 of the Russian program!

This is a fact.

And despite all phrases and assurances, this fact definitely proves that Rosa Luxemburg's friends regarded this question as having been settled by the debate in the Program Commission of the Second Congress as well as by the decision of that Congress; that they tacitly acknowledged their mistake and corrected it by joining the Party in 1906, after they had left

the Congress in 1903, without having once tried through *Party* channels, to raise the question of amending point 9 of the program.

Rosa Luxemburg's article appeared over her signature in 1908—of course, no one ever took it into his head to deny the right of Party writers to criticize the program—and *since* this article was written not a *single* official body of the Polish Marxists has raised the question of revising point 9.

Hence, Trotsky is rendering certain admirers of Rosa Luxemburg a very clumsy service when he writes, in the name of the editors of *Borba*, in No. 2 *of that publication* (March 1914):

> "...The Polish Marxists consider that 'the right to national self-determination' is entirely devoid of political content and should be deleted from the program." (P. 25.)

The obliging Trotsky is more dangerous than an enemy! Trotsky could produce *no* proof except "private conversations" (*i.e.*, simply gossip, on which Trotsky always subsists) for classifying "Polish Marxists" in general as supporters of every article that Rosa Luxemburg writes. Trotsky represented the "Polish Marxists" as people without honour and conscience, incapable of respecting even their own convictions and the program of their Party. Obliging Trotsky!

In 1903, when the representatives of the Polish Marxists left the Second Congress *because* of the right to self-determination, Trotsky was entitled to say that they considered that this right was devoid of content and should be deleted from the program.

But after this the Polish Marxists *joined* the Party which possessed such a program, and not once have they brought in a motion to amend it.*

Why did Trotsky withhold these facts from the readers of his journal? Only because he finds it advantageous to speculate on provoking disagreements between the Polish and the Russian opponents of Liquidatorism and on deceiving the Russian workers on the question of the program.

Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question relating to Marxism. He always manages to "creep into the chinks" of this or that difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At this moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the Liquidators. And these gentlemen do not stand on ceremony as far as the Party is concerned.

Listen to the Bundist Liebmann.

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* We are informed that at the Summer Conference of the Russian Marxists in 1913, the Polish Marxists attended with *only* a voice but no vote and did not vote at all on the right to self-determination (to secession); they declared that they were opposed to this right in general Of course, they had a perfect right to act in this way, and, as hitherto, to agitate in Poland against her secession. But this is not quite what Trotsky is saying; for the Polish Marxists did not demand the "deletion" of *point 9 "from the program."*

"When, fifteen years ago," writes this gentleman, "the Russian Social-Democrats included the point about the right of every nationality to 'self-determination' in their program, everyone [!!] asked himself: what does this fashionable—[!!] term really mean? No answer was forthcoming [!!]. This word was left [!!] enveloped in fog. Indeed, it was difficult at the time to dissipate that fog. The time had not yet come when this point could be made concrete—they used to say at the time—let it remain enveloped in fog—[!!] for the time being and life itself will indicate what content is to be put into this point."

Isn't this "ragamuffin"* mocking at the Party program magnificent?

And why is he mocking?

Only because he is a complete ignoramus who has never learned anything, who has not even read anything on Party history, but who simply happened to drop into a Liquidatorist environment, where it is "the thing" to be blasé on the question of the Party and everything it stands for.

In Pomyalovsky's novel, a bursar brags of having "spat into the barrel with sauerkraut." Messrs. the Bundists go even further. They put up the Liebmanns so that these gentlemen may publicly spit into their own barrel. What do the Liebmanns care about the fact that an International Congress has passed a decision, that at the Congress of their own Party two representatives of their own Bund proved that they were quite able (and what "severe" critics and determined enemies of *Iskra* they were!) to understand the meaning of "self-determination" and even agreed to it? And would it not be easier to dissolve the Party if the "Party writers" (don't laugh) treated the history and the program of the Party in bursar fashion?

Here is a second "ragamuffin," Mr. Yurkevich of *Dzvin* (*The Peal*). Mr. Yurkevich has evidently seen the minutes of the Second Congress, for he cites Plekhanov's words, as repeated by Goldblatt, and shows that he is aware of the fact that self-determination can only mean the right to secession. This, however, does not prevent him from spreading slander among the Ukrainian petty bourgeoisie about the Russian Marxists, alleging that they are in favour of the "state integrity" of Russia. (No. 7-8, 1913, p. 83, etc.) Of course, the Yurkeviches could not have invented a better method than this of alienating the Ukrainian democrats from the Great-Russian democrats. And such alienation is in line with the whole policy of the group of writers on *Dzvin*, who advocate the *segregation* of the Ukrainian workers in a *separate* national organization!**

It is quite appropriate, of course, for a group of nationalist philistines who are splitting the ranks of the proletariat—and such precisely is the

* *Ragamuffin*—a character in Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire *In Foreign Lands*; the term here denotes shameless conduct.—*Ed.*

** See particularly Mr. Yurkevich's preface to Mr. Levinsky's book *Outline of the Development of the Ukrainian Working-Class Movement in Galicia*, Kiev, 1914.

objective role of *Dzvin*—to disseminate such hopeless confusion on the national question. It goes without saying that the Yurkeviches and Liebmanns, who are "terribly" offended when they are called "near-Party men," do not say a word, not a single word, as to how *they* would like the problem of the right of secession to be solved in the program.

Here is the third and principal "ragamuffin," Mr. Semkovsky, who in the columns of a Liquidatorist newspaper, with a Great-Russian audience before him, rails at point 9 of the program and at the same time declares that he "for certain reasons does not approve of the proposal" to delete this point!!

This is incredible, but it is a fact.

In August 1912, the conference of the Liquidators officially raised the national question. For a year and a half not a single article has appeared on the question of point 9 except for the one written by Mr. Semkovsky. And in this article the author *repudiates* the program, because "for *certain* reasons" (is it a secret disease?) he "does not approve" of the proposal to amend it!! We would lay a wager that it would be difficult to find anywhere in the world similar examples of opportunism, and worse than opportunism, of the renunciation of the Party, of its liquidation.

One instance will suffice to show what Semkovsky's arguments are like:

> "What are we to do," he writes, "if the Polish proletariat desires to fight side by side with the entire Russian proletariat, within the limits of a single state, while the reactionary classes of Polish society, on the contrary, desire to separate Poland from Russia and in a referendum obtain a majority of votes in favour of secession? Should we Russian Social-Democrats in the central parliament vote together with our Polish comrades *against* secession, or—in order not to violate the 'right to self-determination'—vote *for* secession?" (*Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* [*New Workers' Gazette*], No. 71.)

From this it is evident that Mr. Semkovsky does not even understand *what the discussion is about*! It did not occur to him that the right to secession presupposes the settlement of the question not by the central parliament, but by the parliament (diet, referendum, etc.) of the *seceding* region.

The childish perplexity over the question—"What are we to do" if under democracy the majority is for reaction?—serves to screen the question of real, actual, live politics, when *both* the Purishkeviches *and* the Kokoshkins consider the very idea of secession as criminal! Probably, the proletarians of *all* Russia ought not to fight the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins today, but leave them alone and fight the reactionary classes of Poland!

Such is the incredible nonsense that is written in the organ of the Liquidators, of which Mr. L. Martov is one of the ideological leaders, the same L. Martov who drafted the program and got it carried in 1903, and

even subsequently wrote in favour of the right of secession. Apparently L. Martov is now arguing according to the rule:

No clever man required there;
Better send Read,
And I shall wait and see.*

He sends Read-Semkovsky, and allows our program to be distorted and endlessly confused in a daily paper before new readers, who are unacquainted with our program.

Yes, Liquidatorism has gone a long way—even very many prominent ex-Social-Democrats have not a trace of Party spirit left in them.

Rosa Luxemburg cannot, of course, be put on a par with the Liebmanns, Yurkeviches and Semkovskys, but the fact that it is precisely people of this kind who seize upon her mistake shows with particular clarity the opportunism she has lapsed into.

X. CONCLUSION

To sum up:

From the point of view of the theory of Marxism in general the question of the right of self-determination presents no difficulties. No one can seriously dispute the London decision of 1896, or the fact that self-determination implies only the right to secession, or the fact that the formation of independent national states is the tendency of all bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

The difficulty is created to a certain extent by the fact that in Russia the proletariat of both oppressed and oppressing nations are fighting and must fight side by side. The task is to preserve the unity of the class struggle of the proletariat for Socialism, to resist all the bourgeois and Black-Hundred nationalist influences. Among the oppressed nations the separate organization of the proletariat as an independent party sometimes leads to such a bitter struggle against the nationalism of the respective nation that the perspective becomes distorted and the nationalism of the oppressing nation is forgotten.

But this distortion of the perspective cannot last long. The experience of the joint struggle of the proletarians of various nations has demonstrated only too plainly that we must formulate political questions not from the "Cracow," but from the all-Russian point of view. And in all-Russian politics it is the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins who rule. Their ideas are predominant, their persecution of alien races for "separatism," for their *thinking* about secession, are being preached and practised in the Duma,

* A verse from a soldiers' song of the period of the Crimean War. An allusion to the unsuccessful operations of the Russian troops commanded by General Read.—*Ed.*

in the schools, in the churches, in the barracks, and in hundreds and thousands of newspapers. It is this Great-Russian poison of nationalism that is contaminating the entire all-Russian political atmosphere. It is the misfortune of a nation, which, in subjugating other nations, is strengthening reaction throughout Russia. The memories of 1849 and 1863* form a living political tradition, which, unless great storms sweep the country, threatens to hamper every democratic and *especially* every Social-Democratic movement for many decades.

There can be no doubt that, however natural the point of view of certain Marxists of the oppressed nations (whose "misfortune" is sometimes that the masses of the population are blinded by the idea of "their" national liberation) may appear sometimes, *in reality* the objective alignment of class forces in Russia makes refusal to advocate the right of self-determination tantamount to the worst opportunism, to the contamination of the proletariat with the ideas of the Kokoshkins. And in substance, these ideas are the ideas and the policy of the Purishkeviches.

Therefore, while Rosa Luxemburg's point of view could at first be excused as being specifically Polish, "Cracow" narrow-mindedness,** at the present time, when nationalism and, above all governmental Great-Russian nationalism, has grown stronger everywhere, when politics are being shaped by this *Great-Russian* nationalism, such narrow-mindedness becomes inexcusable. In fact, it is seized upon by the opportunists of *all* nations who fight shy of the idea of "storms" and "leaps," believe that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is over, and yearn for the Liberalism of the Kokoshkins.

Great-Russian nationalism, like any other nationalism, passes through various phases, according to the classes that are supreme in the bourgeois country at the time. Before 1905 we knew almost exclusively national reactionaries. After the revolution *National Liberals* arose in our country.

In our country this is virtually the position adopted both by the Octobrists and by the Cadets (Kokoshkin), *i.e.*, by the whole of the present-day bourgeoisie.

And later on, Great-Russian National Democrats will *inevitably* appear. Mr. Peshekhonov, one of the founders of the "Popular Socialist" Party, expressed this point of view when (in the issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*

* This refers to the suppression of the Hungarian revolution with the help of tsar Nicholas I troops in 1849 and the crushing of the Polish insurrection by the tsarist government in 1863.—*Ed.*

** It is easy to understand that the recognition by the Marxists of the *whole of Russia*, and first and foremost by the Great Russians, of the *right* of nations to secede in no way precludes *agitation* against secession by Marxists of a particular *oppressed* nation, just as the recognition of the right to divorce does not preclude agitation against divorce *in a particular case*. We *think*, therefore, that an *ever-increasing* number of Polish Marxists will laugh at the non-existent "contradiction" which is now being "hashed up" by Semkovsky and Trotsky.

[*Russian Wealth*] for August 1906) he appealed for caution in regard to the nationalist prejudices of the peasant. However much others may slander us Bolsheviks and declare that we "idealize" the peasant, we always have made and always will make a clear distinction between peasant intelligence and peasant prejudice, between peasant strivings for democracy and opposition to Purishkevich, and peasant strivings to make peace with the priest and the landlord.

Even now, and probably for a fairly long time to come, proletarian democracy must reckon with the nationalism of the Great-Russian peasants (not in the sense of making concessions to it, but in the sense of combating it).* The awakening of nationalism among the oppressed nations, which became so pronounced after 1905 (let us recall, say, the group of "Autonomists-Federalists" in the First Duma, the growth of the Ukrainian movement, of the Moslem movement, etc.), will inevitably cause the intensification of nationalism among the Great-Russian petty bourgeoisie in town and country. The slower the democratization of Russia, the more persistent, brutal and bitter will be national persecution and quarrelling among the bourgeoisie of the various nations. The particularly reactionary spirit of the Russian Purishkeviches will at the same time engender (and strengthen) "separatist" tendencies among the various oppressed nationalities which sometimes enjoy far greater freedom in the neighbouring states.

Such a state of affairs sets the proletariat of Russia a twofold or, rather, a two-sided task: first, to fight against all nationalism and, above all, against Great-Russian nationalism; to recognize not only complete equality of rights for all nations in general, but also equality of rights as regards forming an independent state, *i.e.*, the right of nations to self-determination, to secession. And second, precisely in the interests of the successful struggle against the nationalism of all nations in *any* form, it sets the task of preserving the unity of the proletarian struggle and of the proletarian organizations, of amalgamating these organizations into an international association, in spite of the bourgeois strivings for national segregation.

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* It would be interesting to trace the changes that take place in Polish nationalism, for example, in its process of transformation from aristocratic nationalism into bourgeois nationalism and then into peasant nationalism. Ludwig Bernhard, in his book *Das polnische Gemeinwesen im preussischen Staat* [*The Polish Community in the Prussian State*] (there is a Russian translation), sharing the view of a German Kokoshkin, describes a very characteristic phenomenon: the formation of a sort of "peasant republic" by the Poles in Germany in the form of a close alliance of the various co-operatives and other associations of the *Polish* peasants in their struggle for nationality, for religion, for "Polish" land. German oppression has welded the Poles together, segregated them, first awakening the nationalism of the aristocracy, then of the bourgeois, and finally of the peasant masses (especially after the campaign the Germans inaugurated in 1873 against the Polish language in schools). Things are moving in the same direction in Russia, and not only in regard to Poland.

Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the amalgamation of the workers of all nations—this is the national program that Marxism, the experience of the whole world, and the experience of Russia, teaches the workers.

This article was already set up when I received No. 3 of *Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Our Workers' Gazette*), where Mr. Vl. Kossovsky writes as follows about the recognition of the right of self-determination for all nations:

> "Taken over mechanically from the resolution of the First Congress of the Party (1898), which in turn had borrowed it from the decisions of International Socialist Congresses, it, as is evident from the debate, was given the same meaning at the 1903 Congress as was put into it by the Socialist International, *viz.*, political self-determination, *i.e.*, the self-determination of nations in the direction of political independence. Thus, the formula: national self-determination, which implies the right to territorial separation, does not affect the question of how national relations *within* a given state organism should be regulated for nationalities that cannot or have no desire to leave the present state."

It is evident from this that Mr. Vl. Kossovsky has had in his possession the minutes of the Second Congress of 1903 and perfectly well understands the real (and only) meaning of the term self-determination. Compare this with the fact that the editors of the Bund newspaper *Zeit* (*The Times*) puts up Mr. Liebmann *to jeer at the progra*
vague!! Queer "party" ethics among these B
declares that the Congress took over the pr
mechanically, "Allah alone knows." Some p
how, why and wherefore, they do not know.

First published in *Prosveshcheniye*
Nos. 4, 5 and 6 for 1914

OBJECTIVE DATA ON THE STRENGTH OF THE DIFFERENT TRENDS IN THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

For the class-conscious workers there is no more important task than that of *knowing* their class movement, its nature, its aims and objects, its conditions and practical forms, for the whole strength of the working-class movement lies in its political intelligence, and in its *mass* character. At every step in its development, capitalism increases the number of proletarians, of wage workers, rallies, organizes and enlightens them, and in this way prepares the class force that must inevitably march towards its goal.

The program of the Marxists and their decisions on tactics, as constantly set forth and explained in the press, help to inculcate in the masses of the workers a knowledge of the nature, aims and objects of the movement.

The conflict between the various trends in the working-class movement of Russia has deep class roots. The two "trends" which are fighting Marxism (*Pravda*-ism) in the working-class movement of Russia and which deserve (because of their mass form and of their roots in history) to be called "trends," *i.e.*, Narodism and Liquidatorism, express the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. This has been explained many times by the Marxists and recognized in a number of decisions they have adopted in relation to the Narodniks (the fight against whom has been going on for thirty years) and in relation to the Liquidators (the history of Liquidatorism goes back about twenty years, for Liquidatorism is the direct continuation of "Economism" and Menshevism).

More and more *objective* data are now accumulating on the strength of the different trends in the working-class movement of Russia. Every effort must be made to collect, verify and study these objective data on the conduct and moods not of individuals or groups, but of the *masses*, data taken from different *hostile* newspapers, data that can be *verified* by any literate person.

Only with the help of such data can one learn and make a study of the movement of one's class. One of the gravest, if not the gravest, defects (or crimes against the working class) of the Narodniks and Liquidators, as well as of the various coteries of intellectuals such as the "*Vperyod-ites*," Plekhanovites and Trotskyites, is their *subjectivism*. At every step

they try to pass off their desires, their "opinions," their estimation of the situation and their "plans" as the will of the workers, as the needs of the working-class movement. When they talk about "unity," for example, they majestically ignore the *experience* acquired in creating the genuine unity of the *majority* of the class-conscious workers of Russia in the course of two-and-a-half years, from the beginning of 1912 to the middle of 1914.

Let us then tabulate the available *objective* data on the strength of the different trends in the working-class movement. Let those who believe subjective appraisals and promises do so if they please, let them go to the "coteries." We, however, shall merely invite those who desire to study objective figures to do so. Here are the figures:

	Pravda-ites	Liquidatorists	Per cent: *Pravda*-ites	Per cent: Liquidatorists	Left Narodniks
State Duma Elections:					
1. No. of deputies elected by workers' curia . . . . II Duma 1907	11	12	47	53	—
III " 1907-12	4	4	50	50	boycott
IV " 1912	6	3	67	33	
No. of Workers' Groups which Collected Funds					
2. No. of collections by workers' groups for St. Petersburg newspapers . . . 1912	620	89	—	—	—
1913	2,181	661	76.9	23.1	264
to May 13, 1914 . .	2,873	671	81.1	18.9	524
Election of Workers' Representatives to Insurance Boards					
3. No. of representatives elected to All-Russian Insurance Board	47	10	82.4	17.6	?1—2?
4. Ditto Metropolitan Insurance Board . .	37	7	84.1	15.9	4
Signatures to Resolutions in Favour of Each of the Duma Groups					
5. No. of signatures published in both newspapers in favour of the "six" (*Pravda*-ites) and for the "seven" (Liquidators) . .	6,722	2,985	69.2	30.8	—
Connection with Workers' Groups					
6. No. of communications with various contributions from workers' groups to either of the Duma Groups (Oct. 1913 to June 6, 1914)	1,295	215	85.7	14.3	—

	Pravda-ites	Liquidatorists	Per cent *Pravda*-ites	Per cent Liquidatorists	Left Narodniks
Circulation of St. Petersburg Newspapers					
7. No. of copies printed (figures collected and published by E. Vandervelde) . . .	40,000	16,000	71.4	28.6	12,000 (3times a week)
Press Abroad					
8. No. of issues of leading newspapers published after August (1912) Conference of Liquidators to July 1914	5	0	—	—	9
9. No. of references in these issues to *non-*public organizations (one locality counted as one reference)	44	0	—	—	21
Dependence on the Bourgeoisie					
10. Funds Contributed to St. Petersburg newspapers (from January 1 to May 13, 1914). Percentage of contributions from *non*-workers	—	—	13	50	50
11. No. of financial reports published in the newspapers during entire period . .	3	1	—	—	?(0?)
12. Percentage of above reports showing deficits covered from unstated, *i. e.*, bourgeois sources	—	—	0	100	?
13. Funds passing through the hands of either of the Duma groups (from October 1913 to June 6, 1914). Percentage of funds obtained from *non*-workers . . .	—	[illegible]	6	46	—
14. No. of items of correspondence tacitly passed off as coming from workers when actually taken from bourgeois newspapers without indicating source	—	5	(in two issues, Nos. 17 and 19 of *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*)		0
Trade Unions					
15. No. of trade unions in St. Petersburg in which majority of members (judging by majority on executive boards) sympathize with respective trends	14½*	3½*	—	—	2

* In one union the *Pravda*-ites and Liquidators had an equal number of supporters.

First of all we shall briefly explain the above figures and then draw the conclusions that follow from them.

It will be most convenient to make the explanations point by point. Point 1. *No* figures showing the number of electors and delegates elected are available. Whoever complains about our using "curia" figures simply makes himself ridiculous, for no other figures are available. The German Social-Democrats measure their successes under the Bismarck franchise law which excludes women and thereby creates a "male" curia!

Point 2. The number of workers' groups which pay and not only "sign resolutions" is the most reliable and true criterion not only of the strength of the trend, but also of its state of organization and its Party spirit.

That is why the Liquidators and the "coteries," betray such subjective dislike for this criterion.

The Liquidators argued: We have, in addition, the Jewish and the Georgian newspapers, but *Pravda* stands alone. This is not true. Firstly, the Esthonian and Lithuanian newspapers are *Pravda*-ite. Secondly, if we take the provinces, is it permissible to forget Moscow? The Moscow workers' newspaper, during 1913, rallied, united *390* workers' groups (*Rabochy* [*The Worker*] No. 1, p. 19), whereas the Jewish newspaper *Zeit*, from issue No. 2 (December 29, 1912) to June 1, 1914, united *296* workers' groups (of these 190 were united up to March 20, 1914, and 106 from March 20 to June 1, 1914). Thus, Moscow alone more than "covered" the Liquidators' subjective reference to *Zeit*!

We call on the Georgian and Armenian comrades to collect data on the Liquidators' newspapers in the Caucasus. How many workers' groups are there? Objective data covering all aspects are needed.

Mistakes in counting the groups may have been made, but only in individual cases. We invite everybody to verify the figures and correct them.

Points 3 and 4 need no explanation. It would be desirable to initiate an enquiry for the purpose of collecting *new* data from the provinces.

Point 5. The 2,985 Liquidatorist signatures *include* 1,086 Bundist and 719 Caucasian signatures. It is desirable that the local comrades should verify these figures.

Point 6. The treasurers of the two groups publish reports *of all* funds each group receives for various objects. These figures serve as an exact and objective index of each group's contacts with the workers.

Point 7. Circulation of newspapers. The figures were collected and published by E. Vandervelde but hushed up by the Liquidators and the Liberals. (*Kievskaya Mysl.*) "Subjectivism." It is desirable that fuller figures be collected, if only for one month.

Points 8 and 9. Here we have an objective illustration of the Liquidators' renunciation of the "underground," *i.e.*, of the Party. But from January 1 to May 13, 1914, the *Pravda*-ites received from abroad Rbls. 49.79 (one-fourth of one per cent) and the Liquidators, received Rbls. 1,709.17 (fourteen per cent). Don't say "I can't," say: "I won't"!

Points 10 to 14. These are objective evidence of the dependence of the Liquidators and Narodniks on the bourgeoisie, evidence of their bourgeois character. *Subjectively*, the Liquidators and Narodniks are "Socialists" and "Social-Democrats." *Objectively*, both as regards the substance of their *ideas* as well as the *experience* of the mass movement, they are groups of bourgeois intellectuals trying to sever the minority of the workers from the workers' party.

We particularly draw our readers' attention to the way in which the Liquidators fake workers' correspondence. This is an unprecedented, downright fraud! Let all Marxists in the localities expose this fraud and collect objective data (*cf. Trudovaya Pravda* No. 12, June 11, 1914).

Point 15. These figures are particularly important and ought to be supplemented and verified by a separate enquiry. We have taken the figures from *Sputnik Rabochevo*, Priboy Publishers, St. Petersburg, 1914. Among the unions included in the Liquidators' list were the Clerks' Union, the Engineers' Draftsmen's Union and the Druggist Employees' Union (at the last election of the Executive of the Printers' Union on April 27, 1914, half the members of the Executive and more than half of the alternate members elected were *Pravda*-ites). The Narodnik list of unions includes the Bakers' Union and the Case-Makers' Union. Aggregate membership about 22,000.

Of the thirteen unions in Moscow, ten are *Pravda*-ite and three indefinite, although they are closer to the *Pravda*-ites than to any other trend. There is not a single Liquidatorist or Narodnik union in Moscow.

The conclusions to be drawn from these objective data is that *Pravda*-ism is the only Marxist, proletarian trend, really independent of the bourgeoisie, and has organized, united, *over* four-fifths of the workers (in 1914 81.1 per cent of the workers' groups as compared with 18.9 of the Liquidators). Liquidatorism and Narodism are undoubtedly bourgeois-democratic and not working-class trends.

The experience of the mass movement during 1912, 1913 and half of 1914 has entirely and brilliantly confirmed the correctness of the program, tactical and organizational ideas, decisions and line of the *Pravda*-ites. Convinced that we are on the right road, we should draw the strength for even more intensive efforts.

Published in *Trudovaya Pravda* No. 25,
July 9 [June 26], 1914

THE PERIOD
OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR

THE SECOND REVOLUTION
IN RUSSIA

THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS AND THE WAR

The European war, for which the governments and the bourgeois parties of all countries have been making preparations for decades, has broken out. The growth of armaments, the extreme sharpening of the struggle for markets in the epoch of the latest, the imperialist, stage of capitalist development in the advanced countries, and the dynastic interests of the most backward East-European monarchies were inevitably bound to lead and have led, to this war. The seizure of territory and the subjugation of foreign nations, the ruin of a competing nation and the plunder of its wealth, the diversion of the attention of the working masses from the internal political crises in Russia, Germany, England and other countries, the division of the workers, fooling them by nationalism, and the extermination of their vanguard with the object of weakening the revolutionary movement of the proletariat—such is the only real meaning, substance and significance of the present war.

The first duty of the Social-Democrats is to disclose this true meaning of the war and ruthlessly to expose the falsehood, sophistry and "patriotic" phrasemongering spread by the ruling classes, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, in defence of the war.

The German bourgeoisie heads one group of belligerent nations. It is fooling the working class and the labouring masses by asserting that it is waging war in defence of the fatherland, freedom and civilization, for the liberation of the peoples oppressed by tsardom, for the destruction of reactionary tsardom. But, as a matter of fact, this bourgeoisie, which servilely grovels before the Prussian Junkers, headed by Wilhelm II, has always been a most faithful ally of tsardom and an enemy of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of Russia. In reality, whatever the outcome of the war may be, this bourgeoisie will, together with the Junkers, exert every effort to support the tsarist monarchy against a revolution in Russia.

The German bourgeoisie has in reality launched a predatory campaign against Serbia with the object of subjugating her and throttling the national revolution of the Southern Slavs, at the same time directing the bulk of its military forces against the freer countries, Belgium and France, in order to plunder its richer competitors. Although it is spreading the fable that it is waging a defensive war, the German bourgeoisie, in reality, chose the moment which in its opinion was most propitious for war, taking advantage of its latest improvements in military technique and forestalling

the new armaments that had already been planned and decided upon by Russia and France.

The other group of belligerent nations is headed by the British and French bourgeoisie, which is fooling the working class and the labouring masses by asserting that it is waging a war for the defence of their native lands, freedom and civilization from the militarism and despotism of Germany. But, as a matter of fact, this bourgeoisie has long been using its billions to hire the armies of Russian tsardom, the most reactionary and barbarous monarchy in Europe, and to prepare them for an attack on Germany.

In reality, the object of the struggle of the British and French bourgeoisie is to seize the German colonies and to ruin a competing nation which is distinguished for its more rapid economic development. And, in pursuit of this noble aim, the "advanced" democratic nations are helping the savage tsarist regime to strangle Poland, the Ukraine, etc., and to throttle the revolution in Russia more thoroughly.

Neither of the two groups of belligerent countries lags behind the other in robbery, atrocities and the infinite brutalities of war; but in order to fool the proletariat and distract its attention from the only real war of liberation, namely, a civil war against the bourgeoisie both of "its own" and of "foreign" countries, in order to further this lofty aim, the bourgeoisie of each country is trying with the help of lying talk about patriotism to extol the significance of its "own" national war and to assert that it is not striving to vanquish the enemy for the sake of plunder and the seizure of territory, but for the sake of "liberating" all other peoples, except its own.

But the more zealously the governments and the bourgeoisie of all countries strive to divide the workers and to pit them against each other, and the more ferociously they employ martial law and military censorship (which even now, in time of war, are applied more stringently against the "internal" than against the foreign enemy) for this lofty purpose, the more urgently is it the duty of the class-conscious proletariat to preserve its class solidarity, its internationalism, its Socialist convictions from the orgy of the chauvinism of the "patriotic" bourgeois cliques of all countries. The renunciation of this task would mean the renunciation by the class-conscious workers of all their emancipatory and democratic, not to mention Socialist, aspirations.

It is with a feeling of deepest chagrin that we have to record that the Socialist parties of the leading European countries have not discharged this duty, while the behaviour of the leaders of these parties—particularly of the German—borders on the downright betrayal of the cause of Socialism. At this moment of supreme historical importance to the world, the majority of the leaders of the present, the Second (1889-1914), Socialist International are trying to substitute nationalism for Socialism. Owing to their behaviour, the workers' parties of these countries did not oppose the criminal conduct of the governments but called upon the working class to *identify* its position with that of the imperialist governments. The leaders of the International

committed an act of treachery towards Socialism when they voted for war credits, when they seconded the chauvinist ("patriotic") slogans of the bourgeoisie of their "own" countries, when they justified and defended the war, when they entered the bourgeois Cabinets of belligerent countries, etc., etc. The most influential Socialist leaders, and the most influential organs of the Socialist press of present-day Europe, hold chauvinistic bourgeois and liberal views, and not Socialist views. The responsibility for disgracing Socialism in this way rests primarily on the German Social-Democrats, who were the strongest and most influential party in the Second International. But neither can one justify the French Socialists, who accepted ministerial posts in the government of the very bourgeoisie which betrayed its country and allied itself with Bismarck to crush the Commune.

The German and Austrian Social-Democrats try to justify their support of the war by arguing that they are thereby fighting Russian tsardom. We, the Russian Social-Democrats, declare that we consider such a justification sheer sophistry. During the past few years, the revolutionary movement against tsardom in our country has again assumed tremendous proportions. This movement has always been led by the Russian working class. In the past few years, political strikes involving millions of workers were held, demanding the overthrow of tsardom and a democratic republic. On the very eve of the war, Poincaré, the President of the French Republic, while on his visit to Nicholas II, had the opportunity to see barricades in the streets of St. Petersburg built by the hands of Russian workers. The Russian proletariat has not shrunk from any sacrifice to rid humanity of the disgrace of the tsarist monarchy. But we must say that if anything can, under certain conditions, delay the fall of tsardom, if anything can help tsardom in its struggle against the whole democracy of Russia, it is the present war, which has placed the moneybags of the British, French and Russian bourgeoisie at the disposal of tsardom for its reactionary aims. And if anything can hinder the revolutionary struggle of the Russian working class against tsardom, it is the behaviour of the German and Austrian Social-Democratic leaders, which the chauvinist press of Russia is continually holding up to us as an example.

Even if we assume that German Social-Democracy was so weak that it was compelled to refrain from all revolutionary action, even then it should not have joined the chauvinist camp, it should not have taken steps which caused the Italian Socialists to declare with justice that the leaders of the German Social-Democrats were dishonouring the banner of the proletarian International.

Our Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, has borne, and will yet bear, great sacrifices in connection with the war. The whole of our legal labour press has been suppressed. The majority of the labour unions have been closed, a large number of our comrades have been arrested and exiled. But our parliamentary representatives—the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Group in the State Duma—considered it to be their imperative Socialist duty not to vote for the war credits and even to walk

out of the Duma, in order the more energetically to express their protest; they considered it their duty to brand the policy of the European governments as an imperialist one. And notwithstanding the fact that the oppression of the tsar's government has increased tenfold, our comrades, the workers in Russia, are already publishing their first illegal manifestos against the war and thus doing their duty to democracy and the International.

While the representatives of revolutionary Social-Democracy, in the person of the minority of the German Social-Democrats and the best Social-Democrats in the neutral countries, are experiencing a burning sense of shame over this collapse of the Second International;* while voices of Socialists are being raised both in England and in France against the chauvinism of the majority of the Social-Democratic parties; while the opportunists, as represented, for instance, by the German *Socialist Monthly* (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*), which has long held a national-liberal position, are justly celebrating their victory over European Socialism—the worst possible service to the proletariat is being rendered by those who vacillate between opportunism and revolutionary Social-Democracy (like the "Centre" in the German Social-Democratic Party), by those who attempt to ignore the collapse of the Second International or to cover it up with diplomatic talk.

Quite the contrary, this collapse must be frankly admitted and its causes understood in order to be able to build a new and more lasting Socialist unity of the workers of all countries.

The opportunists have nullified the decisions of the Stuttgart, Copenhagen and Basle Congresses, which made it binding on the Socialists of all countries to fight chauvinism under all conditions, which made it binding on Socialists to retort to every war begun by the bourgeoisie and the governments by intense propaganda for civil war and for social revolution. The collapse of the Second International is the collapse of opportunism, which grew out of the peculiarities of a now past (the so-called "peaceful") historical epoch, and which in recent years has practically come to dominate the International. The opportunists have long been preparing the ground for this collapse by rejecting Socialist revolution and substituting for it bourgeois reformism; by repudiating the class struggle with its inevitable transformation into civil war at certain moments, and by preaching class collaboration; by preaching bourgeois chauvinism under the guise of patriotism and defence of the fatherland, and ignoring or repudiating the fundamental truth of Socialism, long ago expressed in *The Communist Manifesto*, namely, that the workingmen have no country; by confining themselves in their struggle against militarism to a sentimental, philistine point of view, instead of recognizing the need for a revolutionary war of the proletarians of all countries against the bourgeoisie of all countries; by converting the necessary utilization of bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois legality

* Lenin has in view the declaration of September 10, 1914 made by Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin which was published on October 30th and 31st in the Swiss press.—*Ed.*

into a fetish and forgetting that illegal forms of organization and agitation are obligatory in times of crises. That natural "supplement" of opportunism —one equally bourgeois and hostile to the proletarian, *i.e.*, the Marxist, point of view—namely, the anarcho-syndicalist trend, has been marked by a no less shameful smugness in seconding the slogans of chauvinism in the present crisis.

It is impossible to carry out the tasks of Socialism at the present time, it is impossible to achieve a real international unity of the workers, without radically breaking with opportunism and explaining to the masses the inevitability of its bankruptcy.

It must be the prime task of the Social-Democrats in every country to fight the chauvinism of their own country. In Russia the bourgeois liberals (the "Constitutional-Democrats") have been wholly, and the Narodniks—down to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Right" Social-Democrats—partly infected by this chauvinism. (In particular, it is essential to stigmatize the chauvinist utterances of E. Smirnov, P. Maslov and G. Plekhanov, for example, utterances which have been taken up and widely utilized by the bourgeois "patriotic" press.)

Under present conditions, it is impossible to determine, from the standpoint of the international proletariat, the defeat of which of the two groups of belligerent nations would be the lesser evil for Socialism. But for us, the Russian Social-Democrats, there cannot be the slightest doubt that from the standpoint of the working class and of the labouring masses of all the nations of Russia, the lesser evil would be the defeat of the tsarist monarchy, the most reactionary and barbarous of governments, which is oppressing the greatest number of nations and the largest mass of the population of Europe and Asia.

The immediate political slogan of the Social-Democrats of Europe must be the formation of a republican United States of Europe.* But in contrast to the bourgeoisie, which is ready to "promise" anything in order to draw the proletariat into the general current of chauvinism, the Social-Democrats

* "The demand to set up a United States of Europe, in the form advanced in the Manifesto of the Central Committee—coupled with the call to overthrow the Russian, Austrian and German monarchies—differs from the pacifist interpretation of this slogan by Kautsky and others. No. 44 of the Central Organ of our Party, the *Sotsial-Demokrat*, contains an editorial article in which the 'United States of Europe' slogan is proved to be economically fallacious. This is either a demand, unachievable under capitalism, which purports to establish a planned system of world economy and the division of colonies, spheres of influence and so forth among individual countries. Or else—it is a reactionary slogan, implying a temporary alliance between the great powers of Europe the better to oppress the colonies and plunder Japan and America which are developing much more rapidly than they are." (This note which was appended by the editorial board of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* to the Manifesto of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. on the war, published in August-September 1915, was written by Lenin. The editorial in No. 44 of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* mentioned in the note was written by Lenin and entitled "On the United States of Europe Slogan"—see this volume, pp. 617-619.—*Ed.*)

will explain that this slogan is utterly false and senseless without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies.

In Russia, in view of the fact that this country is the most backward and has not yet completed its bourgeois revolution, the task of the Social-Democrats is, as heretofore, to achieve the three fundamental conditions for consistent democratic reform, *viz.*, a democratic republic (with complete equality and self-determination for all nations), confiscation of the landed estates, and an 8-hour day. But the war has placed the slogan of Socialist revolution on the order of the day in all the advanced countries, and this slogan becomes the more urgent, the more the burdens of war press upon the shoulders of the proletariat, and the more active its role must become in the restoration of Europe after the horrors of the present "patriotic" barbarism amidst the gigantic technical progress of big capitalism. The fact that the bourgeoisie is using wartime legislation to completely gag the proletariat makes it absolutely necessary for the latter to create illegal forms of agitation and organization. Let the opportunists "preserve" the legal organizations at the price of betraying their convictions; the revolutionary Social-Democrats will utilize the organizational training and connections of the working class to create illegal forms of fighting for Socialism that are suitable for an epoch of crisis, and to unite the workers not with the chauvinist bourgeoisie of their various countries, but with the workers of all countries. The proletarian International has not perished and will not perish. In spite of all obstacles the worker masses will create a new International. The present triumph of opportunism will be short-lived. The greater the sacrifices the war imposes, the clearer will it become to the mass of the workers that the opportunists have betrayed the workers' cause and that the weapons must be turned against the government and the bourgeoisie of every country.

The only correct proletarian slogan is the transformation of the present imperialist war into a civil war; it was indicated by the experience of the Commune and outlined by the Basle resolution (1912), and it logically follows from all the conditions of an imperialist war among highly developed bourgeois countries. However difficult such a transformation may appear at any given moment, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction once war has become a fact.

Only in this way can the proletariat shake off its dependence on the chauvinist bourgeoisie, and, in one form or another, more or less rapidly, take decisive steps towards the real freedom of nations and towards Socialism.

Long live the international fraternity of the workers against the chauvinism and patriotism of the bourgeoisie of all countries!

Long live a proletarian International, freed from opportunism!

Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 33,
November 1, 1914

THE NATIONAL PRIDE OF THE GREAT RUSSIANS

How many are now talking, arguing and shouting about nationality, about the fatherland! Liberal and radical Cabinet Ministers in England, a multitude of "advanced" publicists in France (who turn out to be in complete agreement with the reactionary publicists), a host of official, Cadet and progressive (including several Narodnik and "Marxist") scribes in Russia—all in a thousand different keys laud the freedom and independence of their "country," the grandeur of the principle of national independence. It is difficult to distinguish here, where the venal eulogizer of the hangman Nicholas Romanov, or of the torturer of Negroes and the inhabitants of India, ends, and where the petty bourgeois who, owing to stupidity or spinelessness, is swimming "with the stream," begins. Nor is that important. We see a very wide and very deep ideological trend, the roots of which are very firmly connected with the interests of Messrs. the landlords and capitalists of the Great Power nations. On the propaganda of ideas advantageous to these classes scores and hundreds of millions are spent every year: by no means a small mill, which takes its waters from all sources, from the convinced chauvinist Menshikov to chauvinists due to opportunism or spinelessness like the Plekhanovs, Maslovs, Rubanoviches, Smirnovs, Kropotkins and Burtsevs.

Let us Great-Russian Social-Democrats also try to define our attitude towards this ideological trend. It would be indecent for us representatives of a Great Power nation in Far Eastern Europe, and a good share of Asia, to forget the enormous significance of the national question—particularly in a country which is justly called the "prison of nations"—at a time when it is precisely in Far Eastern Europe and in Asia that capitalism is rousing a number of "new" big and small nations to life and consciousness; at a moment when the tsarist monarchy has placed under arms millions of Great Russians and "aliens" for the purpose of "deciding" a number of national questions in the interests of the Council of the United Nobility and of the Guchkovs and Krestovnikovs, Dolgorukovs, Kutlers and Rodichevs.

Is the sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian, class-conscious proletarians? Of course not! We love our language and our country, we are doing more than anybody to raise *her* toiling masses (*i.e.*, nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of the conscious life of democrats and Socialists. It pains us more than anybody to see and feel the outrage, oppression

and humiliation inflicted on our splendid country by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that these outrages have roused resistance in our midst, the midst of the Great Russians; that from *this* midst have sprung Radishchev, the Decembrists and the revolutionary commoners of the 'seventies; that the Great-Russian working class in 1905 created a mighty, revolutionary mass party; that at the same time the Great-Russian muzhik began to become a democrat, and began to overthrow the priest and the landlord.

We remember that half a century ago the Great-Russian democrat Chernyshevsky, devoting his life to the cause of the revolution, said: "a miserable nation, a nation of slaves, from top to bottom—all slaves." The avowed and unavowed Great-Russian slaves (slaves of the tsarist monarchy) do not like to recall these words. Yet, in our opinion, these were words of genuine love of our country, love saddened by the absence of a revolutionary spirit among the masses of the Great-Russian people. At that time this spirit did not exist. There is little of it now; but it exists. We are filled with a sense of national pride because the Great-Russian nation has *also* created a revolutionary class, has *also* proved that it is capable of showing mankind great examples of struggle for freedom and for Socialism, and not only great pogroms, rows of gallows, dungeons, great famines and great servility towards priests, tsars, landlords and capitalists.

We are filled with a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past (when the noble landlords led the muzhiks to war in order to crush the freedom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these very landlords, backed by the capitalists, are leading us to war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, in order to crush the democratic movement in Persia and in China, and in order to strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys and Purishkeviches who are disgracing our Great-Russian national dignity. A man is not to blame for being born a slave; but a slave who not only shuns the striving for freedom but justifies and embellishes his slavery (for example, calls the throttling of Poland, Ukraine, etc., "defence of the fatherland" of the Great Russians)—such a slave is a menial and a cad, who inspires legitimate anger, contempt and disgust.

"No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations," said the greatest representatives of consistent democracy of the nineteenth century, Marx and Engels, who became the teachers of the revolutionary proletariat. And we Great-Russian workers, filled with a sense of national pride, want at all costs a free and independent, democratic, republican, proud Great Russia, which shall base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality, and not on the feudal principle of privilege, which is degrading to a great nation. Precisely because we want this, we say it is impossible, in the twentieth century, in Europe (even in Far Eastern Europe), to "defend the fatherland" except by fighting with all revolutionary means the monarchy, the landlords and capitalists of our *own* fatherland, *i.e.*, the *worst*

enemies of our country; that Great Russians cannot "defend their fatherland" unless they desire the defeat of tsarism in any war, as being the least evil for nine-tenths of the population of Great Russia; for tsarism is not only oppressing these nine-tenths of the population economically and politically, but is also demoralizing, degrading, dishonouring and prostituting them by teaching it to oppress other nations, teaching it to cover up its shame with the aid of hypocritical, pseudo-patriotic phrases.

We may be told that apart from tsarism, and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, Great-Russian capitalism, which is performing progressive work by economically centralizing and uniting vast regions. This objection, however, does not excuse, on the contrary, it still more strongly accuses our Socialist-chauvinists, who should be called tsarist-Purishkevich Socialists (just as Marx called the Lassalleans, Royal-Prussian Socialists). Let us assume that history will decide the question in favour of Great-Russian Great Power capitalism, and against the hundred and one small nations. This is not impossible, for the whole history of capital is a history of violence and plunder, blood and mud. We are not in favour of preserving small nations at all costs; *other conditions being equal*, we are absolutely in favour of centralization and are opposed to the petty-bourgeois ideal of federal relationships. Even in the case we have assumed, however, firstly, it is not our business, not the business of democrats (let alone of Socialists) to help Romanov-Bobrinsky-Purishkevich to throttle the Ukraine, etc. Bismarck in his own, Junker, way, performed a progressive historical task; but he would be a fine "Marxist," indeed, who, on these grounds, thought of justifying Socialist support for Bismarck! Moreover, Bismarck facilitated economic development by uniting the scattered Germans who were oppressed by other nations. The economic prosperity and rapid development of Great Russia, however, requires that the country be liberated from the violence the Great Russians perpetrate against other nations—our admirers of the truly Russian near-Bismarcks forget this difference.

Secondly, if history decides the question in favour of Great-Russian Great Power capitalism, it follows that all the greater will be the *Socialist* role of the Great-Russian proletariat as the principal driving force of the Communist revolution, which capitalism gives rise to. And the proletarian revolution requires the prolonged education of the workers in the spirit of *complete* national equality and fraternity. Hence, from the point of view of the interests of precisely the Great-Russian proletariat, the prolonged education of the masses is required so that they may most resolutely, consistently, boldly and in a revolutionary manner champion complete equality and the right of self-determination for all the nations oppressed by the Great Russians. The interests (not in the slavish sense) of the national pride of the Great Russians coincide with the *Socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians. Our model will always be Marx, who, having lived in England for decades, became half English and demanded

the freedom and national independence of Ireland in the interests of the Socialist movement of the English workers.

In the latter case that we have assumed, our home-grown Socialist-chε vinists, Plekhanov, etc., etc., will not only prove to be traitors to th country, free and democratic Great Russia, but also traitors to the pro tarian brotherhood of all the nations of Russia, *i.e.*, to the cause of Socialis

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 35,
December 12, 1914

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE SLOGAN

In No. 40 of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* we reported that the conference of the foreign sections of our Party had decided to defer the question of the "United States of Europe" slogan pending a discussion in the press on the *economic* side of the question.

The debate on this question at our conference assumed a one-sidedly political character. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that the Manifesto of the Central Committee directly formulated this slogan as a political one ("the immediate *political* slogan..." it says there), and not only did it put forward the slogan of a republican United States of Europe, but expressly emphasized the point that this slogan would be senseless and false "without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies."

It would be absolutely wrong to object to such a presentation of the question *merely* from the standpoint of a political estimation of the particular slogan—as for instance, that it obscures or weakens, etc., the slogan of a Socialist revolution. Political changes of a truly democratic trend, and political revolutions all the more, can never under any circumstances obscure or weaken the slogan of a Socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it nearer, widen the basis for it, draw new sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-proletarian masses into the Socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the course of the Socialist revolution, which must not be regarded as a single act, but as an epoch of turbulent political and economic upheavals of the most acute class struggle, civil war, revolutions and counter-revolutions.

But while the slogan of a republican United States of Europe, placed in conjunction with the revolutionary overthrow of the three most reactionary monarchies in Europe, headed by the Russian, is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, there still remains the highly important question of its economic meaning and significance. From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—*i.e.*, export of capital and the fact that the world has been divided up among the "advanced" and "civilized" colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary.

Capital has become international and monopolistic. The world has been divided up among a handful of great powers, *i.e.*, powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations. The four Great Powers of Europe, England, France, Russia and Germany, with a population ranging from 250,000,000 to 300,000,000 with an area of about 7,000,000 square kilo-

metres, possess colonies with a population of *almost half a billion* (494,500,000), with an area of 64,600,000 square kilometres, *i.e.*, almost half the surface of the globe (133,000,000 square kilometres, not including the Arctic region). Add to this the three Asiatic states, China, Turkey and Persia, which are now being torn to pieces by the marauders who are waging a "war of liberation," namely, Japan, Russia, England and France. In those three Asiatic states, which may be called semi-colonies (in reality they are now nine-tenths colonies), there are 360,000,000 inhabitants and their area is 14,500,000 square kilometres (almost one and one-half times the area of the whole of Europe).

Further, England, France and Germany have invested capital abroad to the amount of no less than 70,000,000,000 rubles. The function of securing a "legitimate" profit from this tidy sum, a profit exceeding 3,000,000,000 rubles annually, is performed by the national committees of millionaires, termed governments, which are equipped with armies and navies and which "place" the sons and brothers of "Mr. Billion" in the colonies and semi-colonies in the capacity of viceroys, consuls, ambassadors, officials of all kinds, priests and other leeches.

This is how the plunder of about a billion of the earth's population by a handful of Great Powers is organized in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism. No other organization is possible under capitalism. Give up colonies, "spheres of influence," export of capital? To think that this is possible means sinking to the level of some mediocre parson who preaches to the rich every Sunday about the lofty principles of Christianity and advises them to give to the poor, if not several billions, at least several hundred rubles yearly.

A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement to divide up the colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis, no other principle of division is possible except force. A billionaire cannot share the "national income" of a capitalist country with anyone except in proportion to the capital invested (with an extra bonus thrown in, so that the largest capital may receive more than its due). Capitalism is private property in the means of production, and anarchy in production. To preach a "just" division of income on such a basis is Proudhonism, is stupid philistinism. Division cannot take place except in "proportion to strength." And strength changes with the progress of economic development. After 1871 Germany grew strong three or four times faster than England and France; Japan, about ten times faster than Russia. There is and there can be no other way of testing the real strength of a capitalist state than that of war. War does not contradict the principles of private property—on the contrary, it is a direct and inevitable outcome of those principles. Under capitalism the even economic growth of individual enterprises, or individual states, is impossible. Under capitalism, there are no other means of restoring the periodically disturbed equilibrium than crises in industry and wars in politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements between capitalists and between the Powers are possible. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists ... but what for? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing Socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America, which feel badly treated by the present division of colonies, and which, for the last half century, have grown strong infinitely faster than backward, monarchist Europe, which is beginning to decay with age. Compared with the United States of America, Europe as a whole signifies economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, *i.e.*, under capitalism, a United States of Europe would mean the organization of reaction to retard the more rapid development of America. The times when the cause of democracy and Socialism was associated with Europe alone have gone forever.

A United States of the World (not of Europe alone) is the state form of national federation and national freedom which we associate with Socialism—until the complete victory of Communism brings about the total disappearance of the state, including the democratic state. As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with Socialism; second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of Socialism in a single country is impossible, and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others.

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of Socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country, taken singly. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own Socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states. The political form of society in which the proletariat is victorious by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, will be a democratic republic, which will more and more centralize the forces of the proletariat of the given nation, or nations, in the struggle against the states that have not yet gone over to Socialism. The abolition of classes is impossible without the dictatorship of the oppressed class, the proletariat. The free union of nations in Socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the Socialist republics against the backward states.

It is for these reasons and after repeated debates at the conference of the foreign sections of the R.S.D.L.P., and after the conference, that the editors of the Central Organ have come to the conclusion that the United States of Europe slogan is incorrect.

Sotsial-Demokrat No. 44,
August 23, 1915

OPPORTUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

I

Has the Second International really ceased to exist? Its most authoritative representatives, like Kautsky and Vandervelde stubbornly deny it. Their point of view is that nothing has happened except the rupture of relations; everything is as it should be.

To get to the truth of the matter, we will turn to the *Manifesto of the Basle Congress* of 1912, which applies precisely to the present imperialist World War and was accepted by all the Socialist parties of the world. It should be noted that not a single Socialist dares, in theory, to deny the necessity of giving a concrete, historical appraisal of every war.

Now that war has broken out, neither the avowed opportunists nor the Kautskyites dare repudiate the Basle Manifesto or compare the conduct of the Socialist parties during the war with the demands contained in it. Why? Because the Manifesto completely exposes both.

There is not a single word in the Basle Manifesto about defence of the fatherland, or about the difference between a war of aggression and a war of defence, or a single word about what the opportunists and Kautskyites* of Germany and of the Entente are shouting to the world at all the crossroads. The Manifesto could not say anything of the kind, because what it does say absolutely precludes the application of such concepts. It very concretely refers to the series of economic and political conflicts which for decades had prepared the ground for the present war conflicts which became quite apparent in 1912, and which brought about the war in 1914. The Manifesto recalls the Russo-Austrian conflict for "hegemony in the Balkans"; the conflicts between "England, France and Germany" (among *all* these countries!) over their "policy of conquest in the Near East"; the Austro-Italian conflict over the "striving for dominion" in Albania, etc. In short, the Manifesto defines all these conflicts as conflicts which had arisen on the basis of "capitalist imperialism." Thus, the Manifesto very clear-

* This refers not to the personalities of Kautsky's followers in Germany, but to the international type of pseudo-Marxist who vacillates between opportunism and radicalism, but in reality serves only as a fig-leaf for opportunism.

ly formulates the predatory, imperialist, reactionary, slaveowner character of the present war, *i.e.*, a character which makes the admissibility of defending the fatherland nonsensical in theory and absurd in practice. A struggle is going on among big sharks who want to gobble up other people's "fatherlands." The Manifesto draws the inevitable conclusions from undisputed historical facts: the war "cannot be justified in the least by the pretext of being in the interest of the people"; that it is being prepared for "in the interests of the profits of the capitalists and the ambitions of dynasties." It would be a "crime" if the workers began to "shoot each other," says the Manifesto.

The epoch of capitalist imperialism is the epoch of ripe and over-ripe capitalism, which is on the eve of collapse, which is sufficiently ripe to make way for Socialism. The period between 1789 and 1871 was the epoch of progressive capitalism: when the tasks of overthrowing feudalism and absolutism, and of liberation from the foreign yoke were on the order of the day of history. On these grounds, and on these *alone*, "defence of the fatherland," *i.e.*, struggle against oppression, was permissible. This term would be applicable even now to a war *against* the imperialist Great Powers; but it would be absurd to apply it to a war *among* the imperialist Great Powers, to a war to determine who will be able to rob the Balkan countries, Asia Minor, etc., most. It is not surprising, therefore, that the "Socialists" who advocate "defence of the fatherland" in the present war shun the Basle Manifesto as a thief shuns the place where he has committed a theft. The Manifesto proves that they are social-chauvinists, *i.e.*, Socialists in words, but chauvinists in deeds, who are helping their "own" bourgeoisie to rob other countries, to enslave other nations. The quintessence of the term "chauvinism" is precisely defence of one's "own" fatherland, even when it is striving to enslave other people's fatherlands.

The recognition of the war as a war for national liberation leads to the adoption of one set of tactics; its recognition as an imperialist war leads to the adoption of another set of tactics. The Manifesto clearly points to the latter. The war, it says, "will lead to an economic and political crisis," and "advantage" of this must be taken, not to mitigate the crisis, not to defend the fatherland, but, on the contrary, to "*rouse*" the masses, to "hasten the abolition of capitalist class rule." It is impossible to hasten something for which the historical conditions have not ripened. The Manifesto declared that the social revolution was *possible*, that the prerequisites for it *had ripened*, that it would break out precisely in *connection* with war. Referring to the examples of the *Paris Commune and the Revolution of 1905* in Russia, *i.e.*, to the examples of mass strikes and of civil war, the Manifesto declares that "the ruling classes" fear "a proletarian revolution following as a result of a world war." To say, as Kautsky does, that the Socialist attitude to the *present* war was not defined, is a lie. This question was not only discussed, but decided in Basle, where the tactics of revolutionary proletarian mass struggle were adopted.

To ignore the Basle Manifesto in its entirety, or its most essential parts, and to quote instead the speeches of leaders, or the resolutions passed by various parties, which, in the first place, *preceded* the Basle Congress, secondly, were not the decisions of the parties of the whole world, and thirdly, referred to various *possible* wars, but not to the present war, is sheer hypocrisy. The core of the question is the fact that the epoch of national wars of the European Great Powers has been superseded by an epoch of imperialist wars among the Great Powers, and that the Basle Manifesto for the first time had to recognize this fact officially.

It would be a mistake to assume that the Basle Manifesto cannot be interpreted as being merely a solemn declaration or a pompous threat. That is how those whom the Manifesto exposes would like to interpret it. But it would be wrong to do so. The Manifesto is but the result of the great propaganda work carried on throughout the entire epoch of the Second International; it is but a summary of all that the Socialists have disseminated among the masses in the hundreds of thousands of speeches, articles and manifestos they have delivered and written in all languages. It merely repeats what *Jules Guesde,* for example, wrote in 1899, when he condemned Socialist ministerialism in the event of war: he wrote of war provoked by the "capitalist pirates" (*En Garde,* p. 175); it merely repeats what *Kautsky* wrote in 1908 in his *Road to Power,* where he admitted that the "peaceful" epoch was drawing to a close and that the epoch of wars and revolutions was beginning. To represent the Basle Manifesto as a mere collection of phrases, or as a mistake, is tantamount to regarding the whole of the work that Socialists have been conducting for the last twenty-five years as a collection of phrases, or a mistake. The contradiction between the Manifesto and its non-application is so intolerable for the opportunists and Kautskyites for the very reason that it reveals the profound contradictions inherent in the work of the Second International. The relatively "peaceful" character of the period between 1871 and 1914 first of all fostered opportunism as a *mood,* then as a *trend,* and finally, as a *group or stratum* of the labour bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. These elements were able to gain the upper hand in the labour movement only by recognizing, in words, revolutionary aims and revolutionary tactics. They were able to win the confidence of the masses only by solemnly vowing that all this "peaceful" work was only *preparation* for the proletarian revolution. This contradiction was an abscess which had to burst some day, and it has burst. The whole question is: is it necessary to try, as Kautsky and Co. are doing, to reinject the pus into the body for the sake of "unity" (with the pus), or whether, in order to bring about the complete recovery of the body of the labour movement, to remove the pus as quickly and as thoroughly as possible, notwithstanding the acute pain temporarily caused by the process.

The betrayal of Socialism by those who voted for war credits, entered Cabinets and advocated defence of the fatherland in 1914-15 is obvious. Only hypocrites can deny it. This betrayal must be explained.

II

It would be absurd to regard the whole question as one of personalities. What has opportunism to do with it when men like *Plekhanov* and *Guesde*, etc.?—asks *Kautsky* (*Neue Zeit*, May 18, 1915). What has opportunism to do with it when *Kautsky*, etc.?—replies Axelrod in the name of the opportunists of the Entente (*Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie*, Zurich, 1915, p. 21). All this is a farce. *To explain the crisis of the whole movement it is necessary, firstly, to examine the economic significance of a given policy; secondly, the ideas underlying it; and thirdly, its connection with the history of the various trends in the Socialist movement.*

What is the economic aspect of the theory of national defence in the war of 1914-15? The bourgeoisie of *all* the Great Powers are waging the war for the purpose of partitioning and exploiting the world, for the purpose of oppressing other nations. A few crumbs of the huge profits of the bourgeoisie may fall to the share of a small circle of the labour bureaucracy, the labour aristocracy, and the petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. The class basis of social-chauvinism and of opportunism is the same, namely, the alliance between a thin stratum of privileged workers and "their" national bourgeoisie *against* the masses of the working class; the alliance between the lackeys of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie *against* the class the latter is exploiting.

Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same political content, namely, class collaboration, repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, repudiation of revolutionary action, unconditional recognition of bourgeois legality, lack of confidence in the proletariat, confidence in the bourgeoisie. *Social-chauvinism is the direct continuation and consummation of English liberal-labour politics, of Millerandism and Bernsteinism.*

The struggle between the two main trends in the labour movement, between revolutionary Socialism and opportunist Socialism, fills the entire epoch from 1899 to 1914. At the present time also, in every country, there are two main trends which diverge on the question of the attitude to be taken towards the war. Let us not resort to the bourgeois and opportunist method of referring to personalities. Let us take the *trends* observed in a number of countries. Let us take ten European countries: Germany, England, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium and France. In the first eight countries the division into opportunists and radicals corresponds to the division into social-chauvinists and internationalists. In Germany the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* and Legien and Co. serve as the strongholds of social-chauvinism; in England it is the Fabians and the Labour Party (the I.L.P. has always been in alliance with the latter; it supported their organ, and in this alliance it was always weaker than the social-chauvinists, whereas in the B.S.P. the internationalists form three-sevenths of the membership); in Russia this trend is represented by *Nasha Zarya* (now *Nashe Dyelo*), by the Organization Committee, and by the

Duma group under Chkheidze's leadership; in Italy it is represented by the reformists with Bissolati at their head; in Holland by Troelstra's party; in Sweden by the majority of the Party led by Branting; in Bulgaria by the so-called "broad" Socialists; in Switzerland by Greulich and Co. On the other hand, in all these countries we have heard from the opposite, radical camp, a more or less consistent protest against social-chauvinism. Only two countries form an exception, France and Belgium, where internationalism also exists, but is very weak.

Social-chauvinism is the consummation of opportunism. It is opportunism that has ripened for an open, often vulgar, alliance with the bourgeoisie and the General Staffs.

It is this alliance that gives it great power and the monopoly of the legal printed word and of deceiving the masses. *It is absurd at the present time to regard opportunism as a phenomenon within our Party.* It is absurd to think of carrying out the Basle resolution in conjunction with David, Legien, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Webb. Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's "own" national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat. This does not mean that an immediate breach with the opportunists is possible everywhere; it means only that historically this breach has matured; that it is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; that history, which has led us from "peaceful" capitalism to imperialist capitalism, has prepared the way for this rupture. *Volentem ducunt fata, nolentem trahunt.**

III

The shrewd representatives of the bourgeoisie understand this perfectly. That is why they are so lavish in their praise of the present Socialist Parties, headed by the "defenders of the fatherland," *i.e.*, defenders of imperialist robbery. That is why the governments reward the social-chauvinist leaders either with ministerial posts (in France and England), or with a monopoly of unhindered legal existence (in Germany and Russia). That is why in Germany, where the Social-Democratic Party was the strongest and where its transformation into a national-liberal *counter-revolutionary* labour party has been most obvious, things have got to the stage where the public prosecutor regards the struggle between the "minority" and the "majority" as "incitement to class hatred!" That is why the shrewd opportunists are concerned most of all with the preservation of the former "unity" of the old parties, which rendered such great service to the bourgeoisie in 1914-15. The views of these opportunists of all countries of the world were expounded with a frankness worthy of gratitude by a member of German Social-Democracy in an article signed "Monitor" which appeared in April 1915, in the reactionary magazine *Preussische Jahrbücher.* Monitor thinks that it

* The fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling—*Ed.*

would be very dangerous for the bourgeoisie if Social-Democracy moved *still further to the Right.*

"It [Social-Democracy] must preserve its character as a labour party with Socialist ideals; for on the very day it gives this up a new party will arise, which will adopt the abandoned program in a more radical formulation." (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1915, No. 4, p. 51.)

Monitor hits the nail on the head. This is exactly what the English Liberals and the French Radicals have always wanted: revolutionary-sounding phrases for the purpose of deceiving the masses, for the purpose of inducing them to place their trust in the Lloyd Georges, the Sembats, the Renaudels, the Legiens, and the Kautskys, in the men capable of preaching "defence of the fatherland" in a predatory war.

But Monitor represents only one variety of opportunism: the frank, crude, cynical variety. The others act in a stealthy, subtle, "honest" manner. Engels once said that "honest" opportunists are the most dangerous for the working class.... Here is one example.

Kautsky, in the *Neue Zeit* (November 26, 1915), writes:

"The opposition against the majority is growing; the masses are in an opposition mood.... After the war [only *after* the war? *N.L.*] class antagonisms will become so sharp that radicalism will gain the upper hand among the masses.... After the war [only *after* the war? *N.L.*] we will be menaced by the desertion of the radical elements from the Party and their influx into the party of anti-parliamentary [?? this should be taken to mean extra-parliamentary] mass action.... Thus, our Party is splitting up into two extreme camps, having nothing in common with each other."

For the sake of saving unity Kautsky tries to persuade the majority in the Reichstag to allow the minority to make a few radical parliamentary speeches. That means that Kautsky wishes, with the aid of a few radical parliamentary speeches, to reconcile the revolutionary masses with the opportunists, who have "nothing in common" with revolution, who have long had the leadership of the trade unions, and now, relying on their close alliance with the bourgeoisie and the government, have also captured the leadership of the party. What material difference is there between this and Monitor's "program"? None, except for sentimental phrases which prostitute Marxism.

At a meeting of the Reichstag group held on March 18, 1915, *Wurm,* a Kautskyite, "warned" the group against "pulling the strings too tight. There is growing opposition among the masses of the workers against the majority of the group, and it is necessary to keep to the Marxian" (?! probably a misprint: this should read "the Monitor") "Centre." (*Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg. Material zum Fall Liebknecht.** Privately printed, p. 67.) We

* *"The Class Struggle Against the War. Materials on the Liebknecht Case."—Ed.*

see, therefore, that the revolutionary sentiment of the *masses* was admitted as a *fact* on behalf of *all* the Kautskyites (the so-called "Centre") *as early as March, 1915*!! And eight and a half months later, Kautsky again comes forward with the proposal to "reconcile" the masses who want to fight the opportunist, counter-revolutionary party—and he wants to do this with the aid of a few revolutionary-sounding phrases!!

Frequently war has its uses in that it exposes what is rotten and throws off convention.

Let us compare the English Fabians with the German Kautskyites. This is what a *real* Marxist, Friedrich Engels, wrote about the former on January 18, 1893:

> "... a gang of place hunters, shrewd enough to understand the inevitability of the social revolution, but totally unwilling to entrust this gigantic task to the immature proletariat alone.... Their fundamental principle is fear of revolution." (*Letters to Sorge*, p. 390.)

And on November 11, 1893, he wrote:

> "... those haughty bourgeois who graciously condescend to emancipate the proletariat from above if only it would understand that such a raw, uneducated mass cannot liberate itself and cannot achieve anything without the grace of these clever lawyers, writers and sentimental old women." (*Ibid.*, p. 401.)

In theory Kautsky looks down upon the Fabians with the contempt of a pharisee for a poor sinner; for he worships at the shrine of "Marxism." But what difference is there between the two in practice? Both signed the Basle Manifesto, and both treated it in the same way as Wilhelm II treated Belgian neutrality. But Marx all his life castigated those who strove to quench the revolutionary spirit of the workers.

In opposition to the revolutionary Marxists, Kautsky has advanced the new theory of "ultra-imperialism." By this he means that the "struggle of national finance capitalists among themselves" will be superseded by the "exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital" (*Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915). But he adds: "We have not yet sufficient data to decide whether this new phase of capitalism is possible." Thus, on the grounds of a mere assumption about a "new phase," not even daring to declare definitely that it is "possible," the inventor of this "phase" rejects his own revolutionary declarations, rejects the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat in the *present* "phase" of an *already incipient* crisis, of war, of unprecedentedly sharp class antagonisms! Is this not Fabianism of the most abominable type?

Axelrod, the leader of the Russian Kautskyites, declared that:

> "The centre of gravity of the problem of internationalizing the proletarian movement for emancipation is the internationalization of everyday practice"; for example: "labour protection and insurance legisla-

tion must become the object of the workers' international actions and organization." (Axelrod, *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, Zurich, 1915, pp. 39-40.)

It is quite clear that not only Legien, David and the Webbs, but even Lloyd George himself, and Nauman, Briand and Milyukov would fully associate themselves with such "internationalism." As in 1912, Axelrod, for the sake of the very distant future, is prepared to utter the most revolutionary phrases if the future International "comes out" (against the governments in case of war) "and raises a revolutionary storm." Oh, how brave we are! But when the question is raised of helping and developing the incipient revolutionary ferment among the masses *n o w*, Axelrod replies that these tactics of revolutionary mass actions "would be justified to some extent if we were on the very eve of the social revolution, as was the case in Russia, for example, where the student disorders of 1901 heralded the approaching decisive battles against absolutism." At the present moment, however, all this is "utopia," "Bakuninism," etc. This is quite in the spirit of Kolb, David, Südekum and Legien.

Dear Axelrod forgets, however, that nobody in Russia in 1901 knew, nor could know, that the first "decisive battle" would take place four years later—don't forget, *four* years, and would be "*in*decisive." Nevertheless, we revolutionary Marxists alone were right at that time: we ridiculed the Krichevskys and Martynovs, who called for an immediate assault. We merely advised the workers to kick out the opportunists everywhere and to exert every effort to sustain, sharpen and widen the demonstrations and other mass revolutionary actions. The present situation in Europe is perfectly analogous. It would be absurd to call for an "immediate" assault; but it would be disgraceful to call oneself a Social-Democrat and yet refrain from advising the workers to break with the opportunists and to exert all efforts to strengthen, deepen, widen and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations. Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and at the beginning of a revolutionary ferment nobody can tell whether and when it will lead to a "real," "genuine" revolution. Kautsky and Axelrod give the workers old, threadbare, counter-revolutionary advice. Kautsky and Axelrod feed the masses with the hope that the *future* International will certainly be revolutionary, only in order *at present* to protect, camouflage and embellish the domination of the counter-revolutionary elements—the Legiens, Davids, Vanderveldes and Hyndmans. Is it not obvious that "unity" with Legien and Co. is the best means for preparing the "future" revolutionary International?

"To strive to convert the World War into civil war would be madness," declares *David*, the leader of the German opportunists (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg* [*Social-Democracy and the World War*], 1915, p. 172), in reply to the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party, November 1, 1914. This manifesto says, *inter alia*:

> "However difficult such a transformation may appear at any given moment, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction once war has become a fact."* (This passage is also quoted by David, p. 171.)

A month before David's book appeared our Party published resolutions in which "systematic preparation" was defined as follows: 1) refusal to vote for credits; 2) breaking the class truce; 3) formation of underground organizations; 4) support of manifestations of solidarity in the trenches; 5) support of all revolutionary mass actions.

David is almost as brave as Axelrod. In 1912 he did not think it was "madness" to point to the Paris Commune as an example of what would happen in the event of war.

Plekhanov, that typical representative of the Entente social-chauvinists, argues about revolutionary tactics in the same way as David. He calls it a "farcical dream." But listen to what *Kolb,* a frank opportunist, has to say. Kolb wrote:

> "The tactics of those who group themselves around Liebknecht would result in the struggle within the German nation reaching boiling point." (*Die Sozialdemokratie am Scheidewege* [*Social-Democracy at the Cross-roads*], p. 50.)

But what is a struggle which has reached boiling point if not civil war?

If the tactics of our Central Committee, which, in the main, correspond to the tactics of the Zimmerwald Left, were "madness," "dreams," "adventurism," "Bakuninism," as David, Plekhanov, Axelrod, Kautsky, and others have asserted, they could never lead to a "struggle within a nation," let alone to the struggle reaching boiling point. Nowhere in the world have anarchist phrases brought about a struggle within a nation. But facts prove that precisely in 1915, as a result of the crisis created by the war, the revolutionary ferment among the masses increased; strikes and political demonstrations in Russia, strikes in Italy and in England, hunger demonstrations and political demonstrations in Germany, have all increased. Are these not the beginnings of revolutionary mass struggles?

To strengthen, develop, widen, sharpen mass revolutionary actions; to create underground organizations—without which it is impossible even in "free" countries to tell the truth to the masses of the people—*this is the sum and substance of the practical program of Social-Democracy in this war.* Everything else is either lies or phrases, no matter what opportunist or pacifist theories it is embellished with.**

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* See this volume p. 612.—*Ed.*

** At the International Women's Congress held in Berne in March, 1915, the representatives of the Central Committee of our Party urged the absolute necessity for creating underground organizations. This was rejected. The English delegates laughed at this proposal and praised English "liberty." But a few months later

When we are told that these "Russian tactics" (David's expression) ar not applicable to Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. O November 30 a delegation of Berlin women comrades appeared before th Executive Committee of the Party in Berlin, and stated that

> "now that we have a large organizing apparatus it is much easier t distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to organize 'prohibite meetings' than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law." "Ways and mean are not lacking, evidently the will is lacking." (*Berner Tagwach* 1915, No. 271.)

Were these comrades bad and led astray by the Russian "sectarians, etc.? Are the real *masses* represented, not by these comrades, but by Legie and Kautsky? By Legien, who in the lecture he delivered on January 27 1915, thundered against the "anarchistic" idea of forming undergroun organizations; and by Kautsky, who has become so counter-revolutionar that on November 26, *four* days before the demonstration of ten thousan in Berlin, he denounced street demonstrations as "adventurism"!!

Enough of phrases! Enough of prostituted "Marxism" *à la* Kautsky After twenty-five years of the Second International, after the Basle Mani festo, the workers will no longer trust in phrases. Opportunism has becom over-ripe; it has turned into social-chauvinism and has utterly deserted t the camp of the bourgeoisie. It has severed its ties with Social-Democracy spiritually and politically. It will also break with it organizationally. Th workers are already demanding "illegal" pamphlets and "prohibited" meet ings, *i.e.*, a secret organization to support the revolutionary mass move ment. Only when "war against war" is conducted on these lines does i become Social-Democratic work, and not a phrase. And in spite of al difficulties, temporary defeats, mistakes, going astray, interruptions, thi work will lead humanity to the victorious proletarian revolution.

Published in *Vorbote* No. 1,
January 1916

English papers, like the *Labour Leader*, reached us with blank spaces, and then news arrived about police raids, confiscation of pamphlets, arrests, and harsh sentences imposed on comrades who spoke in England about peace, only about peace!

IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM

A POPULAR OUTLINE

PREFACE TO THE RUSSIAN EDITION

The pamphlet here presented to the reader was written in Zurich in the spring of 1916. In the conditions in which I was obliged to work there I naturally suffered somewhat from a shortage of French and English literature and from a serious dearth of Russian literature. However, I made use of the principal English work, *Imperialism*, J. A. Hobson's book, with all the care that, in my opinion, that work deserves.

This pamphlet was written with an eye to the tsarist censorship. Hence, I was not only forced to confine myself strictly to an exclusively theoretical, mainly economic analysis of facts, but to formulate the few necessary observations on politics with extreme caution, by hints, in that Aesopian language—in that cursed Aesopian language—to which tsarism compelled all revolutionaries to have recourse whenever they took up their pens to write a "legal" work.*

It is very painful, in these days of liberty, to read these cramped passages of the pamphlet, crushed, as they seem, in an iron vise, distorted on account of the censor. Of how imperialism is the eve of the Socialist revolution; of how social-chauvinism (Socialism in words, chauvinism in deeds) is the utter betrayal of Socialism, complete desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie; of how the split in the labour movement is bound up with the objective conditions of imperialism, etc., I had to speak in a "slavish" tongue, and I must refer the reader who is interested in the question to the volume, which is soon to appear, in which are reproduced the articles I wrote abroad in the years 1914-17. Special attention must be drawn, however, to a passage on pages 119-20.** In order to show, in a guise acceptable to the censors, how shamefully the capitalists and the social-chauvinist deserters (whom Kautsky opposes with so much inconsistency) lie on the question of annexations;

* "Aesopian," after the Greek fable writer Aesop, was the term applied to the allusive and roundabout style adopted in "legal" publications by revolutionaries in order to evade the censorship.—*Ed.*

** See this volume p. 720.—*Ed.*

in order to show with what cynicism they *screen* the annexations of *their* capitalists, I was forced to quote as an example—Japan! The careful reader will easily substitute Russia for Japan, and Finland, Poland, Courland, the Ukraine, Khiva, Bokhara, Esthonia or other regions peopled by non-Great Russians, for Korea.

I trust that this pamphlet will help the reader to understand the fundamental economic question, *viz.*, the question of the economic essence of imperialism, for unless this is studied, it will be impossible to understand and appraise modern war and modern politics.

AUTHOR

Petrograd,
April 26, 1917

PREFACE TO THE FRENCH AND GERMAN EDITIONS

I

As was indicated in the preface to the Russian edition, this pamphlet was written in 1916, with an eye to the tsarist censorship. I am unable to revise the whole text at the present time, nor, perhaps, is this advisable, since the main purpose of the book was and remains: to present, on the basis of the summarized returns of irrefutable bourgeois statistics, and the admissions of bourgeois scholars of all countries, a *general picture* of the world capitalist system in its international relationships at the beginning of the twentieth century—on the eve of the first world imperialist war.

To a certain extent it will be useful for many Communists in advanced capitalist countries to convince themselves by the example of this pamphlet, *legal from the standpoint of the tsarist censor,* of the possibility—and necessity—of making use of even the slight remnants of legality which still remain at the disposal of the Communists, say, in contemporary America or France, after the recent wholesale arrests of Communists, in order to explain the utter falsity of social-pacifist views and hopes for "world democracy." The most essential of what should be added to this censored pamphlet I shall try to present in this preface.

II

In the pamphlet I proved that the war of 1914-18 was imperialistic (that is, an annexationist, predatory, plunderous war) on the part of both sides; it was a war for the division of the world, for the partition and repartition of colonies, "spheres of influence" of finance capital, etc.

Proof of what was the true social, or rather, the true class character of the war is naturally to be found, not in the diplomatic history of the war, but in an analysis of the *objective* position of the ruling *classes* in *all* belligerent countries. In order to depict this objective position one must not take examples or isolated data (in view of the extreme complexity of social life it is always quite easy to select any number of examples or separate data to prove any point one desires), but the *whole* of the data concerning the *basis* of economic life in *all* the belligerent countries and the *whole* world

It is precisely irrefutable summarized data of this kind that I quoted in describing the *partition of the world* in the period of 1876 to 1914 (in Chapter VI) and the distribution of the *railways* all over the world in the period of 1890 to 1913 (in Chapter VII). Railways combine within themselves the basic capitalist industries: coal, iron and steel; and they are the most striking index of the development of international trade and bourgeois-democratic civilization. In the preceding chapters of the book I showed how the railways are linked up with large-scale industry, with monopolies, syndicates, cartels, trusts, banks and the financial oligarchy. The uneven distribution of the railways, their uneven development—sums up, as it were, modern world monopolist capitalism. And this summing up proves that imperialist wars are absolutely inevitable under *such* an economic system, *as long as* private property in the means of production exists.

The building of railways seems to be a simple, natural, democratic, cultural and civilizing enterprise; that is what it is in the opinion of bourgeois professors, who are paid to depict capitalist slavery in bright colours, and in the opinion of petty-bourgeois philistines. But as a matter of fact the capitalist threads, which in thousands of different inter-crossings bind these enterprises with private property in the means of production in general, have converted this work of construction into an instrument for oppressing *a thousand million* people (in the colonies and semi-colonies), that is, more than half the population of the globe, which inhabits the subject countries, as well as the wage slaves of capital in the lands of "civilization."

Private property based on the labour of the small proprietor, free competition, democracy, *i.e.*, all the catchwords with which the capitalists and their press deceive the workers and the peasants—are things of the past. Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries. And this "booty" is shared between two or three powerful world marauders armed to the teeth (America, Great Britain, Japan), who involve the whole world in *their* war over the sharing of *their* booty.

III

The Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty dictated by monarchist Germany, and later on, the much more brutal and despicable Versailles Treaty dictated by the "democratic" republics of America and France and also by "free" England, have rendered very good service to humanity by exposing both the hired coolies of the pen of imperialism and the petty-bourgeois reactionaries, although they call themselves pacifists and Socialists, who sang praises to "Wilsonism," and who insisted that peace and reforms were possible under imperialism.

The tens of millions of dead and maimed left by the war—a war for the purpose of deciding whether the British or German group of financial ma-

rauders is to receive the lion's share—and the two "peace treaties," mentioned above, open the eyes of the millions and tens of millions of people, who are downtrodden, oppressed, deceived and duped by the bourgeoisie, with unprecedented rapidity. Thus, out of the universal ruin caused by the war a world-wide revolutionary crisis is arising which, in spite of the protracted and difficult stages it may have to pass, cannot end in any other way than in a proletarian revolution and in its victory.

The Basle Manifesto of the Second International which in 1912 gave an appraisal of the war that ultimately broke out in 1914, and not of war in general (there are all kinds of wars, including revolutionary wars), this Manifesto is now a monument exposing the shameful bankruptcy and treachery of the heroes of the Second International.

That is why I reproduce this Manifesto as a supplement to the present edition and again I call upon the reader to note that the heroes of the Second International are just as assiduously avoiding the passages of this Manifesto which speak precisely, clearly and definitely of the connection between that impending war and the proletarian revolution, as a thief avoids the place where he has committed a theft.

IV

Special attention has been devoted in this pamphlet to a criticism of "Kautskyism," the international ideological trend represented in all countries of the world by the "prominent theoreticians" and leaders of the Second International (Otto Bauer and Co. in Austria, Ramsay MacDonald and others in England, Albert Thomas in France, etc., etc.) and multitudes of Socialists, reformists, pacifists, bourgeois-democrats and parsons.

This ideological trend is, on the one hand, a product of the disintegration and decay of the Second International, and, on the other hand, it is the inevitable fruit of the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, who, by the whole of their conditions of life, are held captive to bourgeois and democratic prejudices.

The views held by Kautsky and his like are a complete renunciation of the very revolutionary principles of Marxism which he championed for decades, especially in his struggle against Socialist opportunism (Bernstein, Millerand, Hyndman, Gompers, etc.). It is not a mere accident, therefore, that the "Kautskyans" all over the world have now united in practical politics with the extreme opportunists (through the Second, or the Yellow International) and with the bourgeois governments (through bourgeois coalition governments in which Socialists take part).

The growing world proletarian revolutionary movement in general, and the Communist movement in particular, demands that the theoretical errors of "Kautskyism" be analysed and exposed. The more so since pacifism and "democracy" in general, which have no claim to Marxism whatever, but

which, like Kautsky and Co., are obscuring the profundity of the contradictions of *imperialism and the inevitable* revolutionary crisis to which it gives rise, are still very widespread all over the world. It is the bounden duty of the Party of the proletariat to combat these tendencies and to win away from the bourgeoisie the small proprietors who are duped by them, and the millions of toilers who live in more or less petty-bourgeois conditions of life.

V

A few words must be said about Chapter VIII entitled: "The Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism." As already pointed out in the text, Hilferding, ex-"Marxist," and now a comrade-in-arms of Kautsky, one of the chief exponents of bourgeois reformist policy in the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, has taken a step backward compared with the *frankly* pacifist and reformist Englishman, Hobson, on this question. The international split of the whole labour movement is now quite evident (Second and Third Internationals). Armed struggle and civil war between the two trends is now a recognized fact: the support given to Kolchak and Denikin in Russia by the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries" against the Bolsheviks; the fight the Scheidemanns, Noskes and Co. have conducted in conjunction with the bourgeoisie against the Spartacists in Germany; the same thing in Finland, Poland, Hungary, etc. What is the economic basis of this historically important world phenomenon?

Precisely the parasitism and decay of capitalism which are the characteristic features of its highest historical stage of development, *i.e.*, imperialism. As has been shown in this pamphlet, capitalism has now brought to the front a *handful* (less than one-tenth of the inhabitants of the globe; less than one-fifth, if the most "generous" and liberal calculations were made) of very rich and very powerful states which plunder the whole world simply by "clipping coupons." Capital exports produce an income of eight to ten billion francs per annum, according to pre-war prices and pre-war bourgeois statistics. Now, of course, they produce much more than that.

Obviously, out of such enormous *super-profits* (since they are obtained *over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of* their "home" country) it is quite *possible to bribe* the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And the capitalists of the "advanced" countries are bribing them; they bribe them in a thousand different ways, direct and indirect, overt and covert.

This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, of the "labour aristocracy," who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their outlook, serves as the principal prop of the Second International, and in our days, the principal *social* (not military) *prop of the bourgeoisie.* They are the real *agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour* movement, the

labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers, stand side by side with the bourgeoisie, with the "Versaillese" against the "Communards."

Not the slightest progress can be made toward the solution of the practical problems of the Communist movement and of the impending social revolution unless the economic roots of this phenomenon are understood and unless its political and sociological significance is appreciated.

Imperialism is the eve of the proletarian social revolution. This has been confirmed since 1917 on a world-wide scale.

N. LENIN

July 6, 1920

During the last fifteen or twenty years, especially since the Spanish-American War (1898), and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the economic and also the political literature of the two hemispheres has more and more often adopted the term "imperialism" in order to define the present era. In 1902, a book by the English economist J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism,* was published in London and New York. This author, who adopts the point of view of bourgeois social reformism and pacifism which, in essence, is identical with the present point of view of the ex-Marxist, K. Kautsky, gives an excellent and comprehensive description of the principal economic and political characteristics of imperialism. In 1910, there appeared in Vienna the work of the Austrian Marxist, Rudolf Hilferding, *Finance Capital* (Russian edition: Moscow, 1912). In spite of the mistake the author commits on the theory of money, and in spite of a certain inclination on his part to reconcile Marxism with opportunism, this work gives a very valuable theoretical analysis, as its sub-title tells us, of "the latest phase of capitalist development." Indeed, what has been said of imperialism during the last few years, especially in a great many magazine and newspaper articles, and also in the resolutions, for example, of the Chemnitz and Basle Congresses which took place in the autumn of 1912, has scarcely gone beyond the ideas put forward, or, more exactly, summed up by the two writers mentioned above.

Later on we shall try to show briefly, and as simply as possible, the connection and relationships between the *principal* economic features of imperialism. We shall not be able to deal with non-economic aspects of the question, however much they deserve to be dealt with. We have put references to literature and other notes which, perhaps, would not interest all readers, at the end of this pamphlet.

I. CONCENTRATION OF PRODUCTION AND MONOPOLIES

The enormous growth of industry and the remarkably rapid process of concentration of production in ever-larger enterprises represent one of the most characteristic features of capitalism. Modern censuses of production give very complete and exact data on this process.

In Germany, for example, for every 1,000 industrial enterprises, large enterprises, *i.e.*, those employing more than 50 workers, numbered three in 1882, six in 1895 and nine in 1907; and out of every 100 workers employed,

this group of enterprises employed 22, 30 and 37 respectively. Concentration of production, however, is much more intense than the concentration of workers, since labour in the large enterprises is much more productive. This is shown by the figures available on steam engines and electric motors.

If we take what in Germany is called *industry in the broad sense of the term*, that is, including commerce, transport, etc., we get the following picture: Large-scale enterprises 30,588 out of a total of 3,265,623, that is to say, 0.9 per cent. These large-scale enterprises employ 5,700,000 workers out of a total of 14,400,000, that is, 39.4 per cent; they use 6,660,000 steam horse power out of a total of 8,800,000, that is, 75.3 per cent and 1,200,000 kilowatts of electricity out of a total of 1,500,000, that is, 77.2 per cent.

Less than one-hundredth of the total enterprises utilize *more than three-fourths* of the steam and electric power! Two million nine hundred and seventy thousand small enterprises (employing up to five workers), representing 91 per cent of the total, utilize only 7 per cent of the steam and electric power. Tens of thousands of large-scale enterprises are everything; millions of small ones are nothing.

In 1907, there were in Germany 586 establishments employing one thousand and more workers. They employed nearly *one-tenth* (1,380,000) of the total number of workers employed in industry and utilized *almost one-third* (32 per cent) of the total steam and electric power employed.* As we shall see, money capital and the banks make this superiority of a handful of the largest enterprises still more overwhelming, in the most literal sense of the word, since millions of small, medium, and even some big "masters" are in fact in complete subjection to some hundreds of millionaire financiers.

In another advanced country of modern capitalism, the United States of America, the growth of the concentration of production is still greater. Here statistics single out industry in the narrow sense of the word and group enterprises according to the value of their annual output. In 1904 large-scale enterprises with an annual output of one million dollars and over numbered 1,900 (out of 216,180, *i.e.*, 0.9 per cent). These employed 1,400,000 workers (out of 5,500,000, *i.e.*, 25.6 per cent) and their combined annual output was valued at $5,600,000,000 (out of $14,800,000,000, *i.e.*, 38 per cent). Five years later, in 1909, the corresponding figures were: large-scale enterprises: 3,060 out of 268,491, *i.e.*, 1.1 per cent, employing: 2,000,000 workers out of 6,600,000, *i.e.*, 30.5 per cent, output: $ 9,000,000,000 out of $ 20,700,000,000, *i.e.*, 43.8 per cent.**

Almost half the total production of all the enterprises of the country was carried on by a hundredth part of those enterprises! These 3,000 giant enterprises embrace 268 branches of industry. From this it can be seen that, at

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* *Annalen des Deutschen Reiches* (Annals of the German Empire), 1911, Zahn, pp. 165-169.

** *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1912, p. 202.

a certain stage of its development, concentration itself, as it were, leads right to monopoly; for a score or so of giant enterprises can easily arrive at an agreement, while on the other hand, the difficulty of competition and the tendency towards monopoly arise from the very dimensions of the enterprises. This transformation of competition into monopoly is one of the most important—if not the most important—phenomena of modern capitalist economy, and we must deal with it in greater detail. But first we must clear up one possible misunderstanding.

American statistics say: 3,000 giant enterprises in 250 branches of industry, as if there were only a dozen large-scale enterprises for each branch of industry.

But this is not the case. Not in every branch of industry are there large-scale enterprises; and moreover, a very important feature of capitalism in its highest stage of development is so-called *combined production,* that is to say, the grouping in a single enterprise of different branches of industry, which either represent the consecutive stages in the working up of raw materials (for example, the smelting of iron ore into pig iron, the conversion of pig iron into steel, and then, perhaps, the manufacture of steel goods)—or are auxiliary to one another (for example, the utilization of waste, or of by-products, the manufacture of packing materials, etc.).

> "Combination," writes Hilferding, "levels out the fluctuations of trade and therefore assures to the combined enterprises a more stable rate of profit. Secondly, combination has the effect of eliminating trading. Thirdly, it has the effect of rendering possible technical improvements, and, consequently, the acquisition of super-profits over and above those obtained by the 'pure' (*i.e.,* non-combined) enterprises. Fourthly, it strengthens the position of the combined enterprises compared with that of 'pure' enterprises in the competitive struggle in periods of serious depression, when the fall in prices of raw materials does not keep pace with the fall in prices of manufactured articles."*

The German bourgeois economist, Heymann, who has written a book especially on "mixed," that is, combined, enterprises in the German iron industry, says: "Pure enterprises perish, crushed between the high price of raw material and the low price of the finished product." Thus we get the following picture:

> "There remain, on the one hand, the great coal companies, producing millions of tons yearly, strongly organized in their coal syndicate, and on the other, the great steel works, closely allied to the coal mines, having their own steel syndicate. These giant enterprises, producing 400,000 tons of steel per annum, with correspondingly ex-

* Rudolf Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital (Finance Capital),* Vienna, second edition, p. 254.

tensive coal, ore and blast furnace plants, as well as the manufacturing of finished goods, employing 10,000 workers quartered in company houses, sometimes owning their own ports and railroads, are today the standard type of German iron and steel plant. And concentration still continues. Individual enterprises are becoming larger and larger. An ever-increasing number of enterprises in one given industry, or in several different industries, join together in giant combines, backed up and controlled by half a dozen Berlin banks. In the German mining industry, the truth of the teachings of Karl Marx on concentration is definitely proved, at any rate in a country like ours where it is protected by tariffs and freight rates. The German mining industry is ripe for expropriation."*

Such is the conclusion which a conscientious bourgeois economist, and such are exceptional, had to arrive at. It must be noted that he seems to place Germany in a special category because her industries are protected by high tariffs. But the concentration of industry and the formation of monopolist manufacturers' combines, cartels, syndicates, etc., could only be accelerated by these circumstances. It is extremely important to note that in free-trade England, concentration *also* leads to monopoly, although somewhat later and perhaps in another form. Professor Hermann Levy, in his special work of research entitled *Monopolies, Cartels and Trusts,* based on data on British economic development, writes as follows:

"In Great Britain it is the size of the enterprise and its capacity which harbour a monopolist tendency. This, for one thing, is due to the fact that the great investment of capital per enterprise, once the concentration movement has commenced, gives rise to increasing demands for new capital for the new enterprises and thereby renders their launching more difficult. Moreover (and this seems to us to be the more important point) every new enterprise that wants to keep pace with the gigantic enterprises that have arisen on the basis of the process of concentration would produce such an enormous quantity of surplus goods that it could only dispose of them either by being able to sell them profitably as a result of an enormous increase in demand or by immediately forcing down prices to a level that would be unprofitable both for itself and for the monopoly combines."

In England, unlike other countries where protective tariffs facilitate the formation of cartels, monopolist alliances of *entrepreneurs,* cartels and trusts, arise in the majority of cases only when the number of competing enterprises is reduced to "a couple of dozen or so." "Here the influence of

* Hans Gideon Heymann, *Die gemischten Werke im deutschen Grosseisengewerbe (Combined Plants in the German Big Iron Industry)*, Stuttgart, 1904, pp. 256 and 278.

the concentration movement on the formation of large industrial monopolies in a whole sphere of industry stands out with crystal clarity."*

Fifty years ago, when Marx was writing *Capital*, free competition appeared to most economists to be a "natural law." Official science tried, by a conspiracy of silence, to kill the works of Marx, which by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism showed that free competition gives rise to the concentration of production, which, in turn, at a certain stage of development, leads to monopoly. Today, monopoly has become a fact. The economists are writing mountains of books in which they describe the diverse manifestations of monopoly, and continue to declare in chorus that "Marxism is refuted." But facts are stubborn things, as the English proverb says, and they have to be reckoned with, whether we like it or not. The facts show that differences between capitalist countries, *e.g.*, in the matter of protection or free trade, only give rise to insignificant variations in the form of monopolies or in the moment of their appearance; and that the rise of monopolies, as the result of the concentration of production, is a general and fundamental law of the present stage of development of capitalism.

For Europe, the time when the new capitalism *definitely* superseded the old can be established with fair precision: it was the beginning of the twentieth century. In one of the latest compilations on the history of the "formation of monopolies," we read:

> "A few isolated examples of capitalist monopoly could be cited from the period preceding 1860; in these could be discerned the embryo of the forms that are common today; but all this undoubtedly represents pre-history. The real beginning of modern monopoly goes back, at the earliest, to the 'sixties. The first important period of development of monopoly commenced with *the international industrial depression of the 'seventies* and lasted until the beginning of the 'nineties. . . . If we examine the question on a European scale, we will find that the development of free competition reached its apex in the 'sixties and 'seventies. Then it was that England completed the construction of its old style capitalist organization. In Germany, this organization had entered into a fierce struggle with handicraft and domestic industry, and had begun to create for itself its own forms of existence. . . ."
>
> "The great revolutionization commenced with the crash of 1873, or rather, the depression which followed it and which, with hardly discernible interruptions in the early 'eighties, and the unusually violent, but short-lived boom about 1889, marks twenty-two years of European economic history. . . . During the short boom of 1889-90, the system of cartels was widely resorted to in order to take advantage of the favourable business conditions. An ill-considered policy drove prices still

* Hermann Levy, *Monopole, Kartelle und Trusts (Monopolies, Cartels and Trusts)*, Jena, 1909, pp. 286, 290, 298.

higher than would have been the case otherwise and nearly all these cartels perished ingloriously in the smash. Another five-year period of bad trade and low prices followed, but a new spirit reigned in industry; the depression was no longer regarded as something to be taken for granted: it was regarded as nothing more than a pause before another boom.

"The cartel movement entered its second epoch: instead of being a transitory phenomenon, the cartels became one of the foundations of economic life. They are winning one field after another, primarily, the raw materials industry. At the beginning of the 'nineties the cartel system had already acquired—in the organization of the coke syndicate on the model of which the coal syndicate was later formed—a cartel technique which could hardly be improved. For the first time the great boom at the close of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900-03 occurred entirely—in the mining and iron industries at least—under the *aegis* of the cartels. And while at that time it appeared to be something novel, now the general public takes it for granted that large spheres of economic life have been, as a general rule, systematically removed from the realm of free competition."*

Thus, the principal stages in the history of monopolies are the following: 1) 1860-70, the highest stage, the apex of development of free competition; monopoly is in the barely discernible, embryonic stage. 2) After the crisis of 1873, a wide zone of development of cartels; but they are still the exception. They are not yet durable. They are still a transitory phenomenon. 3) The boom at the end of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900-03. Cartels become one of the foundations of the whole of economic life. Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism.

Cartels came to an agreement on the conditions of sale, terms of payment, etc. They divide the markets among themselves. They fix the quantity of goods to be produced. They fix prices. They divide the profits among the various enterprises, etc.

The number of cartels in Germany was estimated at about 250 in 1896 and at 385 in 1905, with about 12,000 firms participating.** But it is gener-

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* Th. Vogelstein: *Die finanzielle Organisation der kapitalistischen Industrie und die Monopolbildungen (Financial Organization of the Capitalist Industry and the Formation of Monopolies)* in *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik (Outline of Social Economics)*, Tübingen, 1914, Sec. VI, p. 222 *et seq.* See also by the same author: *Kapitalistische Organisationsformen in der modernen Grossindustrie (Capitalist Organizational Forms in Modern Big Industry*, Vol. I). *Organisationsformen der Eisenindustrie und der Textilindustrie in England und Amerika (The Organizational Forms of the Iron and Textile Industry of England and America*, Vol. I, Leipzig, 1910).

** Dr. Riesser, *Die deutschen Grossbanken und ihre Konzentration im Zusammenhange mit der Entwicklung der Gesamtwirtschaft in Deutschland (The German Big Banks and Their Concentration in Connection with the Development of the General Economy in Germany)*, fourth edition, 1912, pp. 148-49; *cf.* also Robert Liefmann,

ally recognized that these figures are underestimations. From the statistics of German industry for 1907 we quoted above, it is evident that even 12,000 large enterprises control certainly more than half the steam and electric power used in the country. In the United States of America, the number of trusts in 1900 was 185 and in 1907, 250. American statistics divide all industrial enterprises into three categories, according to whether they belong to individuals, to private firms or to corporations. These latter in 1904 comprised 23.6 per cent, and in 1909, 25.9 per cent (*i.e.*, more than one-fourth of the total industrial enterprises in the country). These employed in 1904, 70.6 per cent, and in 1909, 75.6 per cent (*i.e.*, more than three-fourths) of the total wage earners. Their output amounted at these two dates to $10,900,000,000 and to $16,300,000,000, *i.e.*, to 73.7 per cent and 79.0 per cent of the total respectively.

Not infrequently cartels and trusts concentrate in their hands seven or eight-tenths of the total output of a given branch of industry. The Rhine-Westphalian Coal Syndicate, at its foundation in 1893, controlled 86.7 per cent of the total coal output of the area. In 1910, it controlled 95.4 per cent.* The monopoly so created assures enormous profits, and leads to the formation of technical productive units of formidable magnitude.

The famous Standard Oil Company in the United States was founded in 1900:

> "It has an authorized capital of $150,000,000. It issued $ 100,000,000 common and $ 106,000,000 preferred stock. From 1900 to 1907 the folowing dividends were paid on this stock: 48, 48, 45, 44, 36, 40, 40, 40 per cent in the respective years, *i.e.*, in all, $ 367,000,000. From 1882 to 1907, out of a total net profits to the amount of $ 889,000,000, $ 606,000,000 were distributed in dividends, and the rest went to reserve capital....** In 1907 the various works of the United States Steel Corporation employed no less than 210,180 workers and other employees. The largest enterprise in the German mining industry, the Gelsenkirchen Mining Company (*Gelsenkirchener Bergwerksgesellschaft*) employed in 1908, 46,048 persons."*** In 1902, the United States Steel Corporation had already produced 9,000,000 tons of steel.**** Its output constituted in 1901, 66.3 per cent, and in

Kartelle und Trusts und die Weiterbildung der Volkswirtschaftlichen Organisation (Cartels and Trusts and the Further Development of Economic Organization), second edition, 1910, p. 25.

* Dr. Fritz Kestner, *Der Organisationszwang. Eine Untersuchung über die Kämpfe zwischen Kartellen und Aussenseitern (The Compulsion to Organize. An Investigation of the Srtuggle between Cartels and Outsiders)*, Berlin, 1912, p. 11.

** Robert Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und Finanzierungsgesellschaften. Eine Studie über den modernen Kapitalismus und das Effektenwesen (Holding and Finance Companies—A Study in Modern Capitalism and Securities)*, first edition, Jena, 1909, p. 212.

*** *Ibid.*, p. 218.

**** Dr. S. Tschierschky, *Kartelle und Trusts*, Göttingen, 1903, p. 13.

1908, 56.1 per cent of the total output of steel in the United States.* The output of mineral ore was 43.9 per cent and 46.3 per cent respectively.

The report of the American Government Commission on Trusts states:

"The superiority of the trust over competitors is due to the magnitude of its enterprises and their excellent technical equipment. Since its inception, the Tobacco Trust has devoted all its efforts to the substitution of mechanical for manual labour on an extensive scale. With this end in view it bought up all patents that had anything to do with the manufacture of tobacco and spent enormous sums for this purpose. Many of these patents at first proved to be of no use, and had to be modified by the engineers employed by the trust. At the end of 1906, two subsidiary companies were formed solely to acquire patents. With the same object in view, the trust built its own foundries, machine shops and repair shops. One of these establishments, that in Brooklyn, employs on the average 300 workers; here experiments are carried out on inventions concerning the manufacture of cigarettes, cheroots, snuff, tinfoil for packing, boxes, etc. Here, also, inventions are perfected. . . .** Other trusts also employ so-called developing engineers whose business it is to devise new methods of production and to test technical improvements. The United States Steel Corporation grants big bonuses to its workers and engineers for all inventions suitable for raising technical efficiency, or for reducing cost of production."***

In German large-scale industry, *e.g.*, in the chemical industry, which has developed so enormously during these last few decades, the promotion of technical improvement is organized in the same way. By 1908 the process of concentration of production had already given rise to two main "groups" which, in their way, were in the nature of monopolies. First these groups represented "dual alliances" of two pairs of big factories, each having a capital of from twenty to twenty-one million marks: on the one hand, the former Meister Factory at Höchst and the Cassella Factory at Frankfurt am Main; and on the other hand, the aniline and soda factory at Ludwigshafen and the former Bayer factory at Elberfeld. In 1905, one of these groups, and in 1908 the other group, each concluded a separate agreement with yet another big factory. The result was the formation of two "triple alliances," each with a capital of from forty to fifty million marks. And these "alli-

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* Th. Vogelstein, *Organisationsformen (Forms of Organization)*, p. 275.

** *Report of the Commission of Corporations on the Tobacco Industry*, Washington, 1909, p. 266, cited according to Dr. Paul Tafel, *Die nordamerikanischen Trusts und ihre Wirkungen auf den Fortschritt der Technik (North American Trusts and Their Effect on Technical Progress)*, Stuttgart, 1913, p. 48.

*** Dr. P. Tafel, *ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

ances" began to come "close" to one another, to reach "an understanding" about prices, etc.*

Competition becomes transformed into monopoly. The result is immense progress in the socialization of production. In particular, the process of technical invention and improvement becomes socialized.

This is no longer the old type of free competition between manufacturers, scattered and out of touch with one another, and producing for an unknown market. Concentration has reached the point at which it is possible to make an approximate estimate of all sources of raw materials (for example, the iron ore deposits) of a country and even, as we shall see, of several countries, or of the whole world. Not only are such estimates made, but these sources are captured by gigantic monopolist combines. An approximate estimate of the capacity of markets is also made, and the combines "divide" them up amongst themselves by agreement. Skilled labour is monopolized, the best engineers are engaged; the means of transport are captured: railways in America, shipping companies in Europe and America. Capitalism in its imperialist stage arrives at the threshold of the most complete socialization of production. In spite of themselves, the capitalists are dragged, as it were, into a new social order, a transitional social order from complete free competition to complete socialization.

Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally recognized free competition remains, but the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable.

The German economist, Kestner, has written a book especially on the subject of "the struggle between the cartels and outsiders," *i.e.*, enterprises outside the cartels. He entitled his work *Compulsory Organization*, although, in order to present capitalism in its true light, he should have given it the title: "Compulsory Submission to Monopolist Combines." This book is edifying if only for the list it gives of the modern and civilized methods that monopolist combines resort to in their striving towards "organization." They are as follows: 1. Stopping supplies of raw materials ("one of the most important methods of compelling adherence to the cartel"); 2. Stopping the supply of labour by means of "alliances" (*i.e.*, of agreements between employers and the trade unions by which the latter permit their members to work only in cartelized enterprises); 3. Cutting off deliveries; 4. Closing of trade outlets; 5. Agreements with the buyers, by which the latter undertake to trade only with the cartels; 6. Systematic price cutting (to ruin "outside" firms, *i.e.*, those which refuse to submit to the monopolists. Millions are spent in order to sell goods for a certain time below their cost

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* Riesser, *op. cit.*, third edition, pp. 547-48. The newspapers (June 1916) report the formation of a new gigantic trust which is to combine the chemical industry of Germany.

price; there were instances when the price of benzine was thus lowered from 40 to 22 marks, *i.e.*, reduced almost by half!); 7. Stopping credits; 8. Boycott.

This is no longer competition between small and large-scale industry, or between technically developed and backward enterprises. We see here the monopolies throttling those which do not submit to them, to their yoke, to their dictation. This is how this process is reflected in the mind of a bourgeois economist:

> "Even in the purely economic sphere," writes Kestner, "a certain change is taking place from commercial activity in the old sense of the word towards organizational-speculative activity. The greatest success no longer goes to the merchant whose technical and commercial experience enables him best of all to understand the needs of the buyer, and who is able to discover and effectively 'awaken' a latent demand; it goes to the speculative genius [?!] who knows how to estimate, or even only to sense in advance the organizational development and the possibilities of connections between individual enterprises and the banks."*

Translated into ordinary human language this means that the development of capitalism has arrived at a stage when, although commodity production still "reigns" and continues to be regarded as the basis of economic life, it has in reality been undermined and the big profits go to the "geniuses" of financial manipulation. At the basis of these swindles and manipulations lies socialized production; but the immense progress of humanity, which achieved this socialization, goes to benefit the speculators. We shall see later how "on these grounds" reactionary, petty-bourgeois critics of capitalist imperialism dream of going *back* to "free," "peaceful," and "honest" competition.

> "The prolonged raising of prices which results from the formation of cartels," says Kestner, "has hitherto been observed only in relation to the most important means of production, particularly coal, iron and potassium, but has never been observed for any length of time in relation to manufactured goods. Similarly, the increase in profits resulting from that has been limited only to the industries which produce means of production. To this observation we must add that the raw materials industry not only has secured advantages from the cartel formation in regard to the growth of income and profitableness, to the detriment of the finished goods industry, but that it has secured also a *dominating position* over the latter, which did not exist under free competition."**

The words which we have italicized reveal the essence of the case which the bourgeois economists admit so rarely and so unwillingly, and which the

* Kestner, *op. cit.*, p. 241.—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, p. 254.

modern defenders of opportunism, led by K. Kautsky, so zealously try to evade and brush aside. Domination, and violence that is associated with it, such are the relationships that are most typical of the "latest phase of capitalist development"; this is what must inevitably result, and has resulted, from the formation of all-powerful economic monopolies.

We will give one more example of the methods employed by the cartels. It is particularly easy for cartels and monopolies to arise when it is possible to capture all the sources of raw materials, or at least, the most important of them. It would be wrong, however, to assume that monopolies do not arise in other industries in which it is impossible to corner the sources of raw materials. The cement industry, for instance, can find its raw materials everywhere. Yet in Germany it is strongly cartelized. The cement manufacturers have formed regional syndicates: South German, Rhine-Westphalian, etc. The prices fixed are monopoly prices: 230 to 280 marks a carload (at a cost price of 180 marks!). The enterprises pay a dividend of from 12 per cent to 16 per cent—and let us not forget that the "geniuses" of modern speculation know how to pocket big profits besides those they draw by way of dividends. Now, in order to prevent competition in such a profitable industry, the monopolists resort to sundry stratagems. For example, they spread disquieting rumours about the situation in their industry. Anonymous warnings are published in the newspapers, like the following: "Investors, don't place your capital in the cement industry!" They buy up "outsiders" (those outside the syndicates) and pay them "indemnities" of 60,000, 80,000 and even 150,000 marks.* Monopoly everywhere hews a path for itself without scruple as to the means, from "modestly" buying off competitors to the American device of "employing" dynamite against them.

The statement that cartels can abolish crises is a fable spread by bourgeois economists who at all costs desire to place capitalism in a favourable light. On the contrary, when monopoly appears in *certain* branches of industry, it increases and intensifies the anarchy inherent in capitalist production *as a whole*. The disparity between the development of agriculture and that of industry, which is characteristic of capitalism, is increased. The privileged position of the most highly cartelized industry, so-called *heavy* industry, especially coal and iron, causes "a still greater lack of concerted organization" in other branches of production—as Jeidels, the author of one of the best works on the relationship of the German big banks to industry, admits.**

> "The more developed an economic system is," writes Liefmann, one of the most unblushing apologists of capitalism, "the more it

* Ludwig Eschwege. *Zement* in *Die Bank*, 1909, Vol. I, p. 115 *et seq.*

** Otto Jeidels, *Das Verhältnis der deutschen Grossbanken zur Industrie, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Eisenindustrie (The Relationship of the German Big Banks to Industry, with Special Reference to the Iron Industry)*, Leipzig, 1905, p. 271.

resorts to risky enterprises, or enterprises abroad, to those which need a great deal of time to develop, or finally, to those which are only of local importance."*

The increased risk is connected in the long run with the prodigious increase of capital, which overflows the brim, as it were, flows abroad, etc. At the same time the extremely rapid rate of technical progress gives rise more and more to disturbances in the co-ordination between the various spheres of national economy, to anarchy and crises. Liefmann is obliged to admit that:

"In all probability mankind will see further important technical revolutions in the near future which will also affect the organization of the economic system.... (For example, electricity and aviation).... *As a general rule, in such periods of radical economic change, speculation develops on a large scale.*"**

Crises of every kind—economic crises more frequently, but not only these—in their turn increase very considerably the tendency towards concentration and monopoly. In this connection, the following reflections of Jeidels on the significance of the crisis of 1900, which, as we have already seen, marked the turning point in the history of modern monopoly, are exceedingly instructive.

"Side by side with the giant plants in the basic industries, the crisis of 1900 found many plants organized on lines that today would be considered obsolete, the 'pure' [non-combined] plants, which had arisen on the crest of the industrial boom. The fall in prices and the falling off in demand put these 'pure' enterprises into a precarious position, which did not affect the big combined enterprises at all or only affected them for a very short time. As a consequence of this the crisis of 1900 resulted in a far greater concentration of industry than former crises, like that of 1873. The latter crisis also produced a sort of selection of the best equipped enterprises, but owing to the level of technical development at that time, this selection could not place the firms which successfully emerged from the crisis in a position of monopoly. Such a durable monopoly exists to a high degree in the gigantic enterprises in the modern iron and steel and electrical industries, and to a lesser degree, in the engineering industry and certain metal, transport and other branches in consequence of their complicated technique, their extensive organizations and the magnitude of their capital."***

* Robert Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und Finanzierungsgesellschaften (Holding and Finance Companies)*, p. 434.
** *Ibid.*, p. 466.
*** Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

Monopoly! This is the last word in the "latest phase of capitalist development." But we shall only have a very insufficient, incomplete, and poor notion of the real power and the significance of modern monopolies if we do not take into consideration the part played by the banks.

II. THE BANKS AND THEIR NEW ROLE

The principal and primary function of banks is to serve as an intermediary in the making of payments. In doing so they transform inactive money capital into active capital, that is into capital producing a profit; they collect all kinds of money revenues and place them at the disposal of the capitalist class.

As banking develops and becomes concentrated in a small number of establishments the banks become transformed, and instead of being modest intermediaries they become powerful monopolies having at their command almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and small businessmen and also a large part of the means of production and of the sources of raw materials of the given country and in a number of countries. The transformation of numerous modest intermediaries into a handful of monopolists represents one of the fundamental processes in the transformation of capitalism into capitalist imperialism. For this reason we must first of all deal with the concentration of banking.

In 1907-08, the combined deposits of the German joint-stock banks, each having a capital of more than a million marks, amounted to 7,000,000,000 marks, while in 1912-13, they amounted to 9,800,000,000 marks. Thus in five years their deposits increased by 40 per cent. Of the 2,800,000,000 increase, 2,750,000,000 was divided amongst 57 banks, each having a capital of more than 10,000,000 marks. The distribution of the deposits between big and small banks was as follows:*

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEPOSITS

Year	In 9 big Berlin Banks	In the other 48 banks with a capital of more than 10 million marks	In 115 banks with a capital of 1 to 10 million marks	In the small banks with a capital of less than 1 million marks
1907-8	47	32.5	16.5	4
1912-13 . . .	49	36	12	3

* Alfred Lansburgh, *Fünf Jahre deutsches Bankwesen (Five Years of German Banking)* in *Die Bank*, 1913, II, pp. 726-28.

The small banks are being pushed aside by the big banks, of which nine concentrate in their hands almost half the total deposits. But we have left out of account many important details, for instance, the transformation of numerous small banks practically into branches of big banks, etc. Of this we shall speak later on.

At the end of 1913, Schulze-Gaevernitz estimated the deposits in the nine big Berlin banks at 5,100,000,000 marks, out of a total of about 10,000,000,000 marks. Taking into account not only the deposits, but the total resources of these banks, this author wrote:

> "At the end of 1909, the nine big Berlin banks, *together with their affiliated banks* controlled 11,276,000,000 marks, that is, about 83 per cent of the total German bank capital. The Deutsche Bank, *which together with its affiliated banks* controls nearly 3,000,000,000 marks, represents, parallel with the Prussian State Railway Administration, the biggest and also the most decentralized accumulation of capital in the old world."*

We have emphasized the reference to the "affiliated" banks because this is one of the most important features of modern capitalist concentration. Large-scale enterprises, especially the banks, not only completely absorb small ones, but also "join" them to themselves, subordinate them, bring them into their "own" group or "concern" (to use the technical term) by having "holdings" in their capital, by purchasing or exchanging shares, by controlling them through a system of credits, etc., etc. Professor Liefmann has written a voluminous "work" of about 500 pages describing modern "holding and finance companies,"** unfortunately adding "theoretical" reflections of a very poor quality to what is frequently partly digested raw material. To what results this "holding" system leads in regard to concentration is best illustrated in the book written on the big German banks by the banker Riesser. But before examining his data, we will quote an example of the "holding" system.

The Deutsche Bank "group" is one of the biggest, if not the biggest banking group. In order to trace the main threads which connect all the banks in this group, it is necessary to distinguish between "holdings" of the first, second and third degree, or what amounts to the same thing, between dependence (of the lesser establishments on the Deutsche Bank) in the first, second and third degree. We then obtain the following picture:***

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* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank, Grundriss der Sozialökonomik (The German Credit Bank* in *Outline of Social Economics)*, Sec. V, Part II, Tübingen, 1915, pp. 12 and 137.

** Robert Liefmann, *Beteiligungs- und* [illegible] *Studie über den modernen Kapitalismus und das Eff*[illegible] *Companies—A Study in Modern Capitalism and Sec*[illegible] p. 212.

*** A. Lansburgh, *Das Beteiligungssystem im deutschen Bankwesen (The Holding System in German Banking)*, in *Die Bank*, 1910, I, pp. 500 *et seq.*

THE DEUTSCHE BANK PARTICIPATES:

	Permanently	For an indefinite period	Occasionally	Total
1st degree . .	in 17 banks	in 5 banks	in 8 banks	in 30 banks
2nd degree . .	of which 9 participate in 34 others	—	of which 5 participate in 14 others	of which 14 participate in 48 others
3rd degree . .	of which 4 participate in 7 others	—	of which 2 participate in 2 others	of which 6 participate in 9 others

Included in the eight banks dependent on the Deutsche Bank in the "first degree," "occasionally," there are three foreign banks: one Austrian (the Wiener Bankverein) and two Russian (the Siberian Commercial Bank and the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade). Altogether, the Deutsche Bank group comprises, directly and indirectly, partially and totally, no less than 87 banks; and the capital—its own and others which it controls—is estimated at between two and three billion marks.

It is obvious that a bank which stands at the head of such a group, and which enters into agreement with half a dozen other banks only slightly smaller than itself for the purpose of conducting big and profitable operations like floating state loans is no longer a mere "intermediary" but a combine of a handful of monopolists.

The rapidity with which the concentration of banking proceeded in Germany at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries is shown by the following data which we quote in an abbreviated form from Riesser:

SIX BIG BERLIN BANKS

Year	Branches in Germany	Deposit banks and exchange offices	Constant holdings in German joint-stock banks	Total establishments
1895	16	14	1	42
1900	21	40	8	80
1911	104	276	63	450

We see the rapid extension of a close network of canals which cover the whole country, centralizing all capital and all revenues, transforming thousands and thousands of scattered economic enterprises into a single na-

tional, capitalist, and then into an international, capitalist, economic unit. The "decentralization" that Schulze-Gaevernitz, as an exponent of modern bourgeois political economy, speaks of in the passage previously quoted, really means the subordination of an increasing number of formerly relatively "independent," or rather, strictly local economic units, to a single centre. In reality it is *centralization*, the increase in the role, the importance and the power of monopolist giants.

In the older capitalist countries this "banking network" is still more close. In Great Britain (including Ireland), in 1910, there were in all 7,151 branches of banks. Four big banks had more than 400 branches each (from 447 to 689); four had more than 200 branches each, and eleven more than 100 each.

In France, *three* big banks (Crédit Lyonnais, the Comptoir National d'Escompte and the Société Générale) extended their operations and their network of branches in the following manner.*

Year	Number of branches and offices			Capital in million francs	
	In the provinces	In Paris	Total	Own capital	Borrowed capital
1870	47	17	64	200	427
1890	192	66	258	265	1,245
1909	1,033	196	1,229	887	4,363

In order to show the "connections" of a big modern bank, Riesser gives the following figures of the number of letters dispatched and received by the Disconto-Gesellschaft, one of the biggest banks in Germany and in the world, the capital of which amounted to 300,000,000 marks in 1914:

Year	Letters received	Letters dispatched
1852	6,135	6,292
1870	85,800	87,513
1900	533,102	626,043

In 1875, the big Paris bank, the Crédit Lyonnais, had 28,535 accounts. In 1912 it had 63,539.**

* Eugen Kaufmann, *Das französische Bankwesen, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der drei Depositen-Grossbanken (French Banking)*, Tübingen, 1911, pp. 356 and 362.

** Jean Lescure, *L'épargne en France (Savings in France)*, Paris, 1914, p. 52.

These simple figures show perhaps better than long explanations how the concentration of capital and the growth of their turnover is radically changing the significance of the banks. Scattered capitalists are transformed into a single collective capitalist. When carrying the current accounts of a few capitalists, the banks, as it were, transact a purely technical and exclusively auxiliary operation. When, however, those operations grow to enormous dimensions we find that a handful of monopolists control all the operations, both commercial and industrial, of the whole of capitalist society. They can, by means of their banking connections, by running current accounts and transacting other financial operations, first *ascertain exactly* the position of the various capitalists, then *control* them, influence them by restricting or enlarging, facilitating or hindering their credits, and finally they can *entirely determine* their fate, determine their income, deprive them of capital, or, on the other hand, permit them to increase their capital rapidly and to enormous dimensions, etc.

We have just mentioned the 300,000,000 marks' capital of the Disconto-Gesellschaft of Berlin. The increase of the capital of this bank was one of the incidents in the struggle for hegemony between two of the biggest Berlin banks—the Deutsche Bank and the Disconto.

In 1870, the Deutsche Bank, a new enterprise, had a capital of only 15,000,000 marks, while that of the Disconto was 30,000,000 marks. In 1908, the first had a capital of 200,000,000, while the second had 170,000,000. In 1914, the Deutsche Bank increased its capital to 250,000,000 and the Disconto, by merging with a very important bank, the Schaffhausenscher Bankverein, increased its capital to 300,000,000. And of course, while this struggle for hegemony goes on the two banks more and more frequently conclude "agreements" of an increasingly durable character with each other. This development of banking compels specialists in the study of banking questions—who regard economic questions from a standpoint which does not in the least exceed the bounds of the most moderate, and cautious bourgeois reformism—to arrive at the following conclusions:

The German review, *Die Bank,* commenting on the increase of the capital of the Disconto-Gesellschaft to 300,000,000 marks writes:

> "Other banks will follow this same path and in time the three hundred men, who today govern Germany economically, will gradually be reduced to fifty, twenty-five or still fewer. It cannot be expected that this new move towards concentration will be confined to banking. The close relations that exist between certain banks naturally involve the bringing together of the manufacturing concerns which they favour. . . . One fine morning we shall wake up in surprise to see nothing but trusts before our eyes, and to find ourselves faced with the necessity of substituting state monopolies for private monopolies. However, we have nothing to reproach ourselves with, except with us having allowed

things to follow their own course, slightly accelerated by the manipulation of stocks."*

This is an example of the impotence of bourgeois journalism which differs from bourgeois science only in that the latter is less sincere and strives to obscure essential things, to conceal the wood by trees. To be "surprised" at the results of concentration, to "reproach" the government of capitalist Germany, or capitalist "society" ("us"), to fear that the introduction of stocks and shares might "accelerate" concentration in the same way as the German "cartel specialist" Tschierschky fears the American trusts and "prefers" the German cartels on the grounds that they may not, like the trusts, "accelerate technical and economic progress to an excessive degree"**—is not this impotence?

But facts remain facts. There are no trusts in Germany; there are "only" cartels—but Germany is *governed* by not more than three hundred magnates of capital, and the number of these is constantly diminishing. At all events, banks in all capitalist countries, no matter what the law in regard to them may be, greatly intensify and accelerate the process of concentration of capital and the formation of monopolies.

The banking system, Marx wrote half a century ago in *Capital*, "presents indeed the form of common bookkeeping and distribution of means of production on a social scale, but only the form." The figures we have quoted on the growth of bank capital, on the increase in the number of the branches and offices of the biggest banks, the increase in the number of their accounts, etc., present a concrete picture of this "common bookkeeping" of the *whole* capitalist class; and not only of the capitalists, for the banks collect, even though temporarily, all kinds of financial revenues of small businessmen, office clerks, and of a small upper stratum of the working class. It is "common distribution of means of production" that, from the formal point of view, *grows* out of the development of modern banks, the most important of which, numbering from three to six in France, and from six to eight in Germany, control billions and billions. In *point of fact*, however, the distribution of means of production is by no means "common," but private, *i.e.*, it conforms to the interests of big capital, and primarily, of very big monopoly capital, which operates under conditions in which the masses of the population live in want, in which the whole development of agriculture hopelessly lags behind the development of industry, while within industry itself the "heavy industries" exact tribute from all other branches of industry.

The savings banks and post offices are beginning to compete with the banks in the matter of socializing capitalist economy; they are more "decentralized," *i.e.*, their influence extends to a greater number of localities,

* A. Lansburgh, *Die Bank mit den 300 Millionen (The 300 Million Mark Bank)*, in *Die Bank*, 1914, I, p. 426.

** S. Tschierschky, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

to more remote places, to wider sections of the population. An American commission has collected the following data on the comparative growth of deposits in banks and savings banks:*

DEPOSITS (IN BILLIONS OF MARKS)

Year	England		France		Germany		
	Banks	Savings Banks	Banks	Savings Banks	Banks	Credit Societies	Savings Banks
1880	8.4	1.6	?	0.9	0.5	0.4	2.6
1888	12.4	2.0	1.5	2.1	1.1	0.4	4.5
1908	23.2	4.2	3.7	4.2	7.1	2.2	13.9

As they pay interest at the rate of 4 per cent and 4¼ per cent on deposits, the savings banks must seek "profitable" investments for their capital, they must deal in bills, mortgages, etc. The boundaries between the banks and the savings banks "become more and more obliterated." The Chambers of Commerce at Bochum and Erfurt, for example, demand that savings banks be prohibited from engaging in "purely" banking business, such as discounting bills. They demand the limitation of the "banking" operations of the post office.** The banking magnates seem to be afraid that state monopoly will steal upon them from an unexpected quarter. It goes without saying, however, that this fear is no more than the expression, as it were, of the rivalry between two department managers in the same office; for, on the *one* hand, the billions entrusted to the savings banks are in the final analysis actually controlled by *these very same* bank magnates, while, on the other hand, state monopoly in capitalist society is nothing more than a means of increasing and guaranteeing the income of millionaires on the verge of bankruptcy in one branch of industry or another.

The change from the old type of capitalism, in which free competition predominated, to the new capitalism, in which monopoly reigns, is expressed, among other things, by a decrease in the importance of the Stock Exchange. The German review, *Die Bank*, wrote:

> "For a long time now, the Stock Exchange has ceased to be the indispensable intermediary of circulation that it was formerly when the banks were not yet able to place the bulk of new issues with their clients."***

* *Cf. Statistics of the National Monetary Commission*, quoted in *Die Bank*, 1910, I, p. 1200.

** *Die Bank*, 1913, II, pp. 811, 1022; 1914, p. 743.

*** *Die Bank*, 1914, I, p. 316.

"Every bank is a Stock Exchange, and the bigger the bank, and the more successful the concentration of banking, the truer does this proverb become."*

"While formerly, in the 'seventies, the Stock Exchange, flushed with the exuberance of youth" (a "subtle" allusion to the crash of 1873, and to the company promotion scandals), "opened the era of the industrialization of Germany, nowadays the banks and industry are able to 'do it alone.' The domination of our big banks over the Stock Exchange ... is nothing else than the expression of the completely organized German industrial state. If the domain of the automatically functioning economic laws is thus restricted, and if the domain consciously regulated by the banks is considerably increased, the national economic responsibility of a very small number of guiding heads is infinitely increased,"** so wrote Professor Schulze-Gaevernitz, an apologist of German imperialism, who is regarded as an authority by the imperialists of all countries, and who tries to gloss over a "detail," *viz.*, that the "conscious regulation" of economic life by the banks consists in the fleecing of the public by a handful of "completely organized" monopolists. For the task of a bourgeois professor is not to lay bare the mechanism of the financial system, or to divulge all the machinations of the finance monopolists, but, rather to present them in a favourable light.

In the same way, Riesser, a still more authoritative economist and himself a bank man, makes shift with meaningless phrases in order to explain away undeniable facts. He writes:

"...The Stock Exchange is steadily losing the feature which is absolutely essential for national economy as a whole and for the circulation of securities in particular—that of being an exact measuring-rod and an almost automatic regulator of the economic movements which converge on it."***

In other words, the old capitalism, the capitalism of free competition, and its indispensable regulator, the Stock Exchange, are passing away. A new capitalism has come to take its place, which bears obvious features of something transitory, which is a mixture of free competition and monopoly. The question naturally arises: to *what* is this new, "transitory" capitalism leading? But the bourgeois scholars are afraid to raise this question.

"Thirty years ago, employers, freely competing against one another, performed nine-tenths of the work connected with their businesses other than manual labour. At the present time, nine-tenths of this busi-

* Dr. Oskar Stillich, *Geld- und Bankwesen (Money and Banking)*, Berlin, 1907, p. 169.

** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank, Grundriss der Sozialokonomik (German Credit Bank* in *Outline of Social Economics)*, Tübingen, 1915, pp. 12 and 137.

*** Riesser, *op cit.*, fourth edition, p. 630.

ness "brain work" is performed by *officials*. Banking is in the forefront of this evolution."*

This admission by Schulze-Gaevernitz brings us once again to the question as to what this new capitalism, capitalism in its imperialist stage, is leading to.

Among the few banks which remain at the head of all capitalist economy as a result of the process of concentration, there is naturally to be observed an increasingly marked tendency towards monopolist agreements, towards a *bank trust*. In America, there are not nine, but *two* big banks, those of the billionaires Rockefeller and Morgan, which control a capital of eleven billion marks.** In Germany the absorption of the Schaffhausenscher Bankverein by the Disconto-Gesellschaft to which we referred above, was commented on in the following terms by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, one of the organs of the Stock Exchange interests:

> "The concentration movement of the banks is narrowing the circle of establishments from which it is possible to obtain credits, and is consequently increasing the dependence of big industry upon a small number of banking groups. In view of the internal links between industry and finance, the freedom of movement of manufacturing companies, in need of bank capital is restricted. For this reason, big industry is watching the growing trustification of the banks with mixed feelings. Indeed, we have repeatedly seen the beginnings of certain agreements between the individual big banking concerns, which aim at limiting competition."***

Again, the final word in the development of the banks is monopoly.

The close ties that exist between the banks and industry are the very things that bring out most strikingly the new role of the banks. When a bank discounts a bill for an industrial firm, opens a current account for it, etc., these operations, taken separately, do not in the least diminish the independence of the industrial firm, and the bank plays no other part than that of a modest intermediary. But when such operations are multiplied and become an established practice, when the bank "collects" in its own hands enormous amounts of capital, when the running of a current account for the firm in question enables the bank—and this is what happens—to become better informed of the economic position of the client, then the result is that the industrial capitalist becomes more completely dependent on the bank.

At the same time a very close personal union is established between the banks and the biggest industrial and commercial enterprises, the merging

* *Die Bank*, 1912, I, p. 435.

** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Die deutsche Kreditbank, Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*. Tübingen, 1915, pp. 12 and 137.

*** Quoted by Schulze-Gaevernitz, *ibid.*, p. 155.

of one with another through the acquisition of shares, through the appointment of bank directors to the Supervisory Boards (or Boards of Directors) of industrial and commercial enterprises, and *vice versa.* The German economist, Jeidels, has compiled very complete data on this form of concentration of capital and of enterprises. Six of the biggest Berlin banks were represented by their directors in *344* industrial companies; and by their board members in *407* other companies. Altogether, they supervised a total of *751* companies. In *289* of these companies they either had two of their representatives on each of the respective Supervisory Boards, or held the posts of chairmen. These industrial and commercial companies are engaged in the most varied branches of industry: in insurance, transport, restaurants, theatres, art industry, etc. On the other hand, on the Supervisory Boards of these six banks (in 1910) were fifty-one of the biggest manufacturers, including the director of Krupp, of the powerful "Hapag" (Hamburg-America Line), etc. From 1895 to 1910, each of these six banks participated in the share and bond issues of many hundreds of industrial companies (the number ranging from 281 to 419).*

The "personal union" between the banks and industry is completed by the "personal union" between both and the state.

> "Seats on the Supervisory Board," writes Jeidels, "are freely offered to persons of title, also to ex-civil servants, who are able to do a great deal to facilitate" (!!) "relations with the authorities.... Usually, on the Supervisory Board of a big bank, there is a member of parliament or a Berlin city councillor."

The building, so to speak, of the great capitalist monopolies is therefore going on full steam ahead in all "natural" and "supernatural" ways. A sort of division of labour amongst some hundreds of kings of finance who reign over modern capitalist society is being systematically developed.

> "Simultaneously with this widening of the sphere of activity of certain big industrialists" (sharing in the management of banks, etc.) "and together with the allocation of provincial bank managers to definite industrial regions, there is a growth of specialization among the managers of the big banks.... Generally speaking, this specialization is only conceivable when banking is conducted on a large scale, and particularly when it has widespread connections with industry. This division of labour proceeds along two lines: on the one hand, the relations with industry as a whole are entrusted to one manager, as his special function; on the other, each manager assumes the supervision of several isolated enterprises, or enterprises with allied interests, or in the same branch of industry, sitting on their Boards of Directors" (capitalism has reached the stage of organized *control* of individual enterprises). "One specializes in German industry, sometimes even in

* Jeidels, *op. cit.*; Riesser, *op. cit.*—*Ed.*

West German industry alone" (the West is the most industrialized part of Germany). "Others specialize in relations with foreign states and foreign industry, in information about manufacturers, in Stock Exchange questions, etc. Besides, each bank manager is often assigned a special industry or locality, where he has a say as a member of the Board of Directors; one works mainly on the Board of Directors of electric companies, another in the chemical, brewing or sugar beet industry; a third in a few isolated industrial enterprises, but at the same time in non-industrial, *i.e.*, insurance companies.... It is certain that, as the extent and diversification of the big banks' operations increase, the division of labour among their directors also spreads, with the object and result of lifting them somewhat out of pure banking and making them better experts, better judges of the general problems of industry and the special problems of each branch of industry, thus making them more capable of action within the respective bank's industrial sphere of influence. This system is supplemented by the banks' endeavours to have elected to their own Supervisory Boards, or to those of their subsidiary banks, men who are experts in industrial affairs, such as manufacturers, former officials, especially those formerly in the railway service or in mining," etc.*

We find the same system, with only slight difference, in French banking. For instance, one of the three biggest French banks, the Crédit Lyonnais, has organized a financial research service (*service des études financières*), which permanently employs over fifty engineers, statisticians, economists, lawyers, etc., at a cost of six or seven hundred thousand francs annually. The service is in turn divided into eight sections, of which one deals with industrial establishments, another with general statistics, a third with railway and steamship companies, a fourth with securities, a fifth with financial reports, etc.**

The result is twofold: on the one hand the merging, to an ever greater extent, or, as N. Bukharin aptly calls is, the coalescence of bank and industrial capital; and on the other hand, a transformation of the banks into institutions of a truly "universal character." On this question we think it necessary to quote the exact terms used by Jeidels, who has best studied the subject:

"An examination of the sum total of industrial relationships reveals the *universal character* of the financial establishments working on behalf of industry. Unlike other kinds of banks and contrary to the requirements often laid down in literature—according to which banks ought to specialize in one kind of business or in one branch

* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-57.

** Eugen Kaufmann, *Die Organisation der französischen Depositen-Grossbanken (Organization of the Big French Deposit Banks)*, in *Die Bank*, 1909, II, pp. 854 and 855.

of industry in order to maintain a firm footing—the big banks are striving to make their industrial connections as varied and far-reaching as possible, according to locality and branch of business, and are striving to do away with the inequalities in the distribution of capital among localities and branches of business resulting from the historical development of individual banking houses.... One tendency is to make the ties with industry general; another tendency is to make these ties durable and close. In the six big banks both these tendencies are realized, not in full, but to a considerable extent and to an equal degree."*

Quite often industrial and commercial circles complain of the "terrorism" of the banks. And it is not surprising that such complaints are heard, for the big banks "command," as will be seen from the following example: on November 19, 1901, one of the big Berlin "D" banks (such is the name given to the four biggest banks whose names begin with the letter D**) wrote to the Board of Directors of the German Central Northwest Cement Syndicate in the following terms:

"As we learn from the notice you published in the *Reichsanzeiger* of the 18th instant, we must reckon with the possibility that the next general meeting of your company, fixed for the 30th of this month, may decide on measures which are likely to effect changes in Your undertakings which are unacceptable to us. We deeply regret that, for these reasons, we are obliged henceforth to withdraw the credit which had been hitherto allowed you.... But if the said next general meeting does not decide upon measures which are unacceptable to us and if we receive suitable guarantees on this matter for the future, we shall be quite willing to open negotiations with you on the grant of a new credit."***

As a matter of fact, this is small capital's old complaint about being oppressed by big capital, but in this case it was a whole syndicate that fell into the category of "small" capital. The old struggle between big and small capital is being resumed on a new and higher stage of development. It stands to reason that undertakings, financed by big banks handling billions, can accelerate technical progress in a way that cannot possibly be compared with the past. The banks, for example, set up special technical research societies, and only "friendly" industrial enterprises benefit from their work. To this category belong the Electric Railway Research Association and the Central Bureau of Scientific and Technical Research.

The directors of the big banks themselves cannot fail to see that new

* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

** *I.e.*, Deutsche Bank, Disconto-Gesellschaft, Dresdner Bank and Darmstädter Bank.—*Ed.*

*** Dr. Oscar Stillich, *Geld- und Bankwesen*, Berlin, 1907, p 147.

conditions of national economy are being created. But they are powerless in the face of these phenomena.

"Anyone who has watched, in recent years," writes Jeidels, "the changes of incumbents of directorships and seats on the Supervisory Boards of the big banks, cannot fail to have noticed that power is gradually passing into the hands of men who consider the active intervention of the big banks in the general development of industry to be indispensable and of increasing importance. Between these new men and the old bank directors, disagreements of a business and often of a personal nature are growing on this subject. The question that is in dispute is whether or not the banks, as credit institutions, will suffer from this intervention in industry, whether they are sacrificing tried principles and an assured profit to engage in a field of activity which has nothing in common with their role as intermediaries in providing credit, and which is leading the banks into a field where they are more than ever before exposed to the blind forces of trade fluctuations. This is the opinion of many of the older bank directors, while most of the young men consider active intervention in industry to be a necessity as great as that which gave rise, simultaneously with big modern industry, to the big banks and modern industrial banking. The two parties to this discussion are agreed only on one point: and that is, that as yet there are neither firm principles nor a concrete aim in the new activities of the big banks."*

The old capitalism has had its day. The new capitalism represents a transition towards something. It is hopeless, of course, to seek for "firm principles and a concrete aim" for the purpose of "reconciling" monopoly with free competition. The admission of the practical men has quite a different ring from the official praises of the charms of "organized" capitalism sung by its apologists, Schulze-Gaevernitz, Liefmann and similar "theoreticians."

At precisely what period were the "new activities" of the big banks finally established? Jeidels gives us a fairly exact answer to this important question:

"The ties between the banks and industrial enterprises, with their new content, their new forms and their new organs, namely, the big banks which are organized on both a centralized and a decentralized basis, were scarcely a characteristic economic phenomenon before the 'nineties; in one sense, indeed this initial date may be advanced to the year 1897, when the important 'mergers' took place and when, for the first time, the new form of decentralized organization was introduced to suit the industrial policy of the banks. This starting point could perhaps be placed at an even later date, for it was the

* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-84.

crisis (of 1900) that enormously accelerated and intensified the process of concentration of industry and banking, consolidated that process, for the first time transformed the connection with industry into the monopoly of the big banks, and made this connection much closer and more active."*

Thus, the beginning of the twentieth century marks the turning point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of finance capital.

III. FINANCE CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL OLIGARCHY

"A steadily increasing proportion of capital in industry," Hilferding writes, "does not belong to the industrialists who employ it. They obtain the use of it only through the medium of the banks, which, in relation to them, represent the owners of the capital. On the other hand, the bank is forced to keep an increasing share of its funds engaged in industry. Thus, to an increasing degree the banker is being transformed into an industrial capitalist. This bank capital, i.e., capital in money form which is thus really transformed into industrial capital, I call 'finance capital'.... Finance capital is capital controlled by banks and employed by industrialists."**

This definition is incomplete in so far as it is silent on one extremely important fact: the increase of concentration of production and of capital to such an extent that it leads, and has led, to monopoly. But throughout the whole of his work, and particularly in the two chapters which precede the one from which this definition is taken, Hilferding stresses the part played by *capitalist monopolies.*

The concentration of production; the monopoly arising therefrom; the merging or coalescense of banking with industry—this is the history of the rise of finance capital and what gives the term "finance capital" its content.

We now have to describe how, under the general conditions of commodity production and private property, the "domination" of capitalist monopolies inevitably becomes the domination of a financial oligarchy. It should be noted that the representatives of German bourgeois science—and not only of German science—like Riesser, Schulze-Gaevernitz, Liefmann and others are all apologists of imperialism and of finance capital. Instead of revealing the "mechanics" of the formation of an oligarchy, its methods, its revenues "innocent and sinful," its connections with parliaments, etc.,

* *Ibid.*, p. 181.
** R. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital*, second edition, p. 301.

they conceal, obscure and embellish them. They evade these "vexed questions" by a few vague and pompous phrases: appeals to the "sense of responsibility" of bank directors, praising "the sense of duty" of Prussian officials; by giving serious study to petty details, to ridiculous bills of parliament—for the "supervision" and "regulation" of monopolies; by playing with theories, like, for example, the following "scientific" definition, arrived at by Professor Liefmann: ***"Commerce is an occupation having for its object: collecting goods, storing them and making them available."**** (The Professor's bold-face italics.) From this it would follow that commerce existed in the time of primitive man, who knew nothing about exchange, and that it will exist under Socialism!

But the monstrous facts concerning the monstrous role of the financial oligarchy are so striking that in all capitalist countries, in America, France and Germany, a whole literature has sprung up, written from the *bourgeois* point of view, but which, nevertheless, gives a fairly accurate picture and criticism—petty-bourgeois, naturally—of this oligarchy.

The "holding system," to which we have already briefly referred above, should be made the cornerstone. The German economist, Heymann, probably the first to call attention to this matter, describes it in this way:

> "The head of the concern controls the parent company; the latter reigns over the subsidiary companies which in their turn control still other subsidiaries. Thus, it is possible with a comparatively small capital to dominate immense spheres of production. As a matter of fact, if holding 50 per cent of the capital is always sufficient to control a company, the head of the concern needs only one million to control eight millions in the second subsidiaries. And if this 'interlocking' is extended, it is possible with one million to control sixteen, thirty-two or more millions."**

Experience shows that it is sufficient to own 40 per cent of the shares of a company in order to direct its affairs,*** since a certain number of small, scattered shareholders find it impossible, in practice, to attend general meetings, etc. The "democratization" of the ownership of shares, from which the bourgeois sophists and opportunists, "would-be" Social-Democrats expect (or declare that they expect) the "democratization of capital," the strengthening of the role and significance of small-scale production, etc., is, in fact, one of the ways of increasing the power of the financial oligarchy. Incidentally, this is why, in the more advanced, or in the older and more "experienced" capitalist countries, the law allows the issue of shares of very small denomination. In Germany, it is not permitted by

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* R. Liefmann, *Beteiligungsgesellschaften*, p. 476.

** Hans Gideon Heymann, *Die gemischten Werke im deutschen Grosseisengewerbe*, Stuttgart, 1904, p. 269.

*** Liefmann, *Beteiligungsgesellschaften*, first edition, p. 258.

the law to issue shares of less value than one thousand marks, and the magnates of German finance look with an envious eye at England, where the issue of one-pound shares is permitted. Siemens, one of the biggest industrialists and "financial kings" in Germany, told the Reichstag on June 7, 1900, that "the one-pound share is the basis of British imperialism."* This merchant has a much deeper and more "Marxian" understanding of imperialism than a certain disreputable writer, generally held to be one of the founders of Russian Marxism, who believes that imperialism is a bad habit of a certain nation....

But the "holding system" not only serves to increase enormously the power of the monopolists; it also enables them to resort with impunity to all sorts of shady tricks to cheat the public, for the directors of the parent company are not legally responsible for the subsidiary companies, which are supposed to be "independent," and *through the medium* of which they can "pull off" *anything*. Here is an example taken from the German review, *Die Bank*, for May 1914:

> "The Spring Steel Company of Kassel was regarded some years ago as being one of the most profitable enterprises in Germany. Through bad management its dividends fell within the space of a few years from 15 per cent to nil. It appears that the Board, without consulting the shareholders, had loaned *six million marks* to one of the subsidiary companies, the Hassia, Ltd., which had a nominal capital of only some hundreds of thousands of marks. This commitment, amounting to nearly treble the capital of the parent company, was never mentioned in its balance sheets. This omission was quite legal and could be kept up for two whole years because it did not violate any provision of company law. The chairman of the Supervisory Board, who as the responsible head had signed the false balance sheets, was, and still is, the president of the Kassel Chamber of Commerce. The shareholders only heard of the loan to the Hassia, Ltd., long afterwards, when it had long been proved to have been a mistake" (this word the writer should here put in quotation marks), "and when Spring Steel shares had dropped nearly 100 points, because those in the know had got rid of them....
>
> "*This typical example of balance-sheet jugglery, quite common* in joint-stock companies, explains why their Boards of Directors are more willing to undertake risky transactions than individual dealers. Modern methods of drawing up balance sheets not only make it possible to conceal doubtful undertakings from the average shareholder, but also allow the people most concerned to escape the consequence of unsuccessful speculation by selling their shares in time while the individual dealer risks his own skin in everything he does....

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* Schulze-Gaevernitz in *op. cit.*, p. 110.

"The balance sheets of many joint-stock companies put us in mind of the palimpsests of the Middle Ages from which the visible inscription had first to be erased in order to discover beneath it another inscription giving the real meaning of the document." (Palimpsests are parchment documents from which the original inscription has been obliterated and another inscription imposed.)

"The simplest and, therefore, most common procedure for making balance sheets indecipherable is to divide a single business into several parts by setting up subsidiary companies—or by annexing such. The advantages of this system for various objects—legal and illegal—are so evident that it is now quite unusual to find an important company in which it is not actually in use."*

As an example of an important monopolist company widely employing this system, the author quotes the famous General Electric Company (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft—A.E.G.) to which we shall refer below. In 1912, it was calculated that this company held shares in from *175 to 200* other companies, controlling them, of course, and thus having control of a total capital of *1,000,000,000* marks.**

All rules of control, the publication of balance sheets, the drawing up of balance sheets according to a definite form, the public auditing of accounts, etc., the things about which well-intentioned professors and officials—that is, those imbued with the good intention of defending and embellishing capitalism—discourse to the public, are of no avail. For private property is sacred, and no one can be prohibited from buying, selling, exchanging or mortgaging shares, etc.

The extent to which this "holding system" has developed in the big Russian banks may be judged by the figures given by E. Agahd, who was for fifteen years an official of the Russo-Chinese Bank and who, in May 1914, published a book, not altogether correctly entitled *Big Banks and the World Market*.*** The author divides the big Russian banks into two main categories: *a*) banks that come under a "holding system," and *b*) "independent" banks—"independence," however, being arbitrarily taken to mean independence of *foreign* banks. The author divides the first group into three sub-groups: 1) German participation, 2) British participation, and 3) French participation, having in view the "participation" and domination of the big

* Ludwig Eschwege, *Tochtergesellschaften (Subsidiary Companies)*, in *Die Bank*, 1914, I, pp. 544-46.

** Kurt Heinig, *Der Weg des Elektrotrusts (The Path of the Electric Trust)* in *Die Neue Zeit*, 1912, Vol. II, p. 484.

*** E. Agahd, *Grossbanken und Weltmarkt. Die wirtschaftliche und politische Bedeutung der Grossbanken im Weltmarkt unter Berücksichtigung ihres Einflusses auf Russlands Volkswirtschaft und die deutsch-russischen Beziehungen. (Big Banks and the World Market.* The economic and political significance of the big banks on the world market, with reference to their influence on Russia's national economy and German-Russian relations. Berlin, 1914, pp. 11-17.)

foreign banks of the particular country mentioned. The author divides the capital of the banks into "productively" invested capital (in industrial and commercial undertakings), and "speculatively" invested capital (in Stock Exchange and financial operations), assuming, from his petty-bourgeois reformist point of view, that it is possible, under capitalism, to separate the first form of investment from the second and to abolish the second form.

Here are the figures he supplies:

BANK ASSETS

(According to Reports for October-November, 1913, in millions of rubles)

Groups of Russian Banks	Capital invested		Total
	Productive	Speculative	
a 1) Four banks: Siberian Commercial Bank, Russian Bank, International Bank, and Discount Bank	413.7	859.1	1,272.8
a 2) Two banks: Commercial and Industrial, and Russo-British	239.3	169.1	408.4
a 3) Five banks: Russian-Asiatic, St. Petersburg Private, Azov-Don, Union Moscow, Russo-French Commercial	711.8	661.2	1,373.0
Total: (11 banks) a= . .	1,364.8	1,689.4	3,054.2
b Eight banks: Moscow Merchants, Volga-Kama, Junker and Co., St. Petersburg Commercial (formerly Wawelberg), Bank of Moscow (formerly Riabushinsky), Moscow Discount, Moscow Commercial, Private Bank of Moscow	504.2	391.1	895.3
Total: (19 banks)	1,869.0	2,080.5	3,949.5

According to these figures, of the approximately four billion rubles making up the "working" capital of the big banks, *more than three-fourths*, more than three billion, belonged to banks which in reality were only "subsidiary companies" of foreign banks, and chiefly of the Paris banks (the famous trio: Union Parisienne, Paris et Pays-Bas and Société Générale), and of the Berlin banks (particularly the Deutsche Bank and Disconto-Gesellschaft). Two of the most important Russian banks, the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade and the St. Petersburg International Commercial, between 1906 and 1912 increased their capital from 44,000,000 to 98,000,000 rubles, and their reserve from 15,000,000 to 39,000,000 "employing three-fourths German

capital." The first belongs to the Deutsche Bank group and the second to the Disconto-Gesellschaft. The worthy Agahd is indignant at the fact that the majority of the shares are held by the Berlin banks, and that, therefore, the Russian shareholders are powerless. Naturally, the country which exports capital skims the cream: for example, the Deutsche Bank, while introducing the shares of the Siberian Commercial Bank on the Berlin market, kept them in its portfolio for a whole year, and then sold them at the rate of 193 for 100, that is, at nearly twice their nominal value, "earning" a profit of nearly 6,000,000 rubles, which Hilferding calls "promoters' profits."

Our author puts the total "resources" of the principal St. Petersburg banks at 8,235,000,000 rubles, about 8¼ billions, and the "holdings," or rather, the extent to which foreign banks dominated them, he estimates as follows: French banks, 55 per cent; English, 10 per cent; German, 35 per cent. The author calculates that of the total of 8,235,000,000 rubles of functioning capital, 3,687,000,000 rubles, or over 40 per cent, fall to the share of the syndicates, Produgol and Prodamet—and the syndicates in the oil, metallurgical and cement industries. Thus, the merging of bank and industrial capital has also made great strides in Russia owing to the formation of capitalist monopolies.

Finance capital, concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., tightens the grip of financial oligarchies and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists. Here is an example, taken from a multitude of others, of the methods of "business" of the American trusts, quoted by Hilferding: in 1887, Havermeyer founded the Sugar Trust by amalgamating fifteen small firms, whose total capital amounted to 6,500,000. Suitably "watered" as the Americans say, the capital of the trust was increased to 50,000,000. This "over-capitalization" anticipated the monopoly profits, in the same way as the United States Steel Corporation anticipated its profits by buying up as many iron fields as possible. In fact, the Sugar Trust set up monopoly prices on the market, which secured it such profits that it could pay 10 per cent dividend on capital "watered" *sevenfold, or about 70 per cent on the capital actually invested at the time of the creation of the trust*! In 1909, the capital of the Sugar Trust was increased to 90,000,000. In twenty-two years, it had increased its capital more than tenfold.

In France the role of the "financial oligarchy" (*Against the Financial Oligarchy in France*, the title of the well-known book by Lysis, the fifth edition of which was published in 1908) assumed a form that was only slightly different. Four of the most powerful banks enjoy, not a relative, but an "absolute monopoly" in the issue of bonds. In reality, this is a "trust of the big banks." And their monopoly ensures the monopolist profits from bond issues. Usually a country borrowing from France does not get more than 90 per cent of the total of the loan, the remaining 10 per cent goes

to the banks and other middlemen. The profit made by the banks out of the Russo-Chinese loan of 400,000,000 francs amounted to 8 per cent; out of the Russian (1904) loan of 800,000,000 francs the profit amounted to 10 per cent; and out of the Moroccan (1904) loan of 62,500,000 francs, to 18.75 per cent. Capitalism, which began its development with petty usury capital, ends its development with gigantic usury capital. "The French," says Lysis, "are the usurers of Europe." All the conditions of economic life are being profoundly modified by this transformation of capitalism. With a stationary population, and stagnant industry, commerce and shipping, the "country" can grow rich by usury. "Fifty persons, representing a capital of 8,000,000 francs can control *2,000,000,000* francs deposited in four banks." The "holding system," with which we are already familiar, leads to the same result. One of the biggest banks, the Société Générale, for instance, issues 64,000 bonds for one of its subsidiary companies, the Egyptian Sugar Refineries. The bonds are issued at 150 per cent, *i.e.*, the bank gaining 50 centimes on the franc. The dividends of the new company are then found to be fictitious. The "public" lost from 90 to 100 million francs. One of the directors of the Société Générale was a member of the board of directors of the Egyptian Sugar Refineries. Hence, it is not surprising that the author is driven to the conclusion that "the French Republic is a financial monarchy"; "it is the complete domination of the financial oligarchy; the latter controls the press and the government."*

The extraordinarily high rate of profit obtained from the issue of securities, which is one of the principal functions of finance capital, plays a large part in the development and consolidation of the financial oligarchy.

> "There is not a single business of this type within the country that brings in profits even approximately equal to those obtained from the flotation of foreign loans"** (says the German magazine, *Die Bank*).
>
> "No banking operation brings in profits comparable with those obtained from the issue of securities!"***

According to the *German Economist*, the average annual profits made on the issue of industrial securities were as follows:

	Per cent		Per cent
1895	38.6	1898	67.7
1896	36.1	1899	66.9
1897	66.7	1900	55.2

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* Lysis, *Contre l'oligarchie financière en France (Against the Financial Oligarchy in France)*, fifth edition, Paris, 1908, pp. 11, 12, 26, 39, 40, 47-48.

** *Die Bank*, 1913, No. 7, p. 630.

*** Stillich, *op. cit.*, p. 143.—*Ed.*

"In the ten years from 1891 to 1900, *more than a billion* marks of profits were 'earned' by issuing German industrial securities."*

While, during periods of industrial boom, the profits of finance capital are disproportionately large, during periods of depression, small and unsound businesses go out of existence, while the big banks take "holdings" in their shares, which are bought up cheaply or in profitable schemes for their "reconstruction" and "reorganization." In the "reconstruction" of undertakings which have been running at a loss,

"the share capital is written down, that is, profits are distributed on a smaller capital and subsequently are calculated on this smaller basis. If the income has fallen to zero, new capital is called in, which, combined with the old and less remunerative capital, will bring in an adequate return. Incidentally," adds Hilferding, "these reorganizations and reconstructions have a twofold significance for the banks: first, as profitable transactions; and secondly, as opportunities for securing control of the companies in difficulties."**

Here is an instance. The Union Mining Company of Dortmund, founded in 1872, with a share capital of nearly 40,000,000 marks, saw the market price of shares rise to 170 after it had paid a 12 per cent dividend in its first year. Finance capital skimmed the cream and earned a trifle of something like 28,000,000 marks. The principal sponsor of this company was that very big German Disconto-Gesellschaft which so successfully attained a capital of 300,000,000 marks. Later, the dividends of the Union declined to nil: the shareholders had to consent to a "writing down" of capital, that is, to losing some of it in order not to lose it all. By a series of "reconstructions," more than 73,000,000 marks were written off the books of the Union in the course of thirty years.

"At the present time, the original shareholders of the company possess only 5 per cent of the nominal value of their shares."***

But the banks "made a profit" out of every "reconstruction."

Speculation in land situated in the suburbs of rapidly growing towns is a particularly profitable operation for finance capital. The monopoly of the banks merges here with the monopoly of ground rent and with monopoly in the means of communication, since the increase in the value of the land and the possibility of selling it profitably in allotments, etc., is mainly dependent on good means of communication with the centre of the town;

* Stillich, *ibid.*, also Werner Sombart, *Die deutsche Volkswirtschaft im 19. Jahrhundert und im Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts (German National Economy in the Nineteenth and the Beginning of the Twentieth Centuries)*, second edition, Berlin, 1909, p. 526, 8th Appendix.

** Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital*, second edition, p. 152.

*** Stillich, *op. cit.*, p. 138 and Liefmann, p. 51.

and these means of communication are in the hands of large companies which are connected by means of the holding system and by the distribution of positions on the directorates, with the interested banks. As a result we get what the German writer, L. Eschwege, a contributor to *Die Bank*, who has made a special study of real estate business and mortgages, etc., calls the formation of a "bog." Frantic speculation in suburban building lots; collapse of building enterprises (like that of the Berlin firm of Boswau and Knauer, which grabbed 100,000,000 marks with the help of the "sound and solid" Deutsche Bank—the latter acting, of course, discreetly behind the scenes through the holding system and getting out of it by losing "only" 12,000,000 marks), then the ruin of small proprietors and of workers who get nothing from the fraudulent building firms, underhand agreements with the "honest" Berlin police and the Berlin administration for the purpose of getting control of the issue of building sites, tenders, building licenses, etc.*

"American ethics," which the European professors and well-meaning bourgeois so hypocritically deplore, have, in the age of finance capital, become the ethics of literally every large city, no matter what country it is in.

At the beginning of 1914, there was talk in Berlin of the proposed formation of a "transport trust," *i.e.*, of establishing "community of interests" between the three Berlin passenger transport undertakings: The Metropolitan electric railway, the tramway company and the omnibus company.

> "We know," wrote *Die Bank*, "that this plan has been contemplated since it became known that the majority of the shares in the bus company has been acquired by the other two transport companies.... We may believe those who are pursuing this aim when they say that by uniting the transport services, they will secure economies part of which will in time benefit the public. But the question is complicated by the fact that behind the transport trust that is being formed are the banks, which, if they desire, can subordinate the means of transportation, which they have monopolized, to the interests of their real estate business. To be convinced of the reasonableness of such a conjecture, we need only recall that at the very formation of the Elevated Railway Company the traffic interests became interlocked with the real estate interests of the big bank which financed it, and this interlocking even created the prerequisites for the formation of the transport enterprise. Its eastern line, in fact, was to run through land which, when it became certain the line was to be laid down, this bank sold to a real estate firm at an enormous profit for itself and for several partners in the transactions."**

* Ludwig Eschwege, *Der Sumpf (The Bog)*, in *Die Bank*, 1913, II, p. 952, *et seq.*; *ibid.*, 1912, I, p. 223, *et seq.*

** *Verkehrstrust (Transport Trust)* in *Die Bank*, 1914, I, pp. 89-90.

A monopoly, once it is formed and controls thousands of millions, inevitably penetrates into *every* sphere of public life, regardless of the form of government and all other "details." In the economic literature of Germany one usually comes across the servile praise of the integrity of the Prussian bureaucracy, and allusions to the French Panama scandal and to political corruption in America. But the fact is that *even* the bourgeois literature devoted to German banking matters constantly has to go far beyond the field of purely banking operations and to speak, for instance, of "the attraction of the banks" in reference to the increasing frequency with which public officials take employment with the banks.

> "How about the integrity of a state official who in his inmost heart is aspiring to a soft job in the Behrenstrasse"* (the street in Berlin in which the head office of the Deutsche Bank is situated).

In 1909, the publisher of *Die Bank*, Alfred Lansburgh, wrote an article entitled "The Economic Significance of Byzantinism," in which he incidentally referred to Wilhelm II's tour of Palestine, and to "the immediate result of this journey," the construction of the Bagdad railway, that fatal "standard product of German enterprise, which is more responsible for the 'encirclement' than all our poitical blunders put together."** (By encirclement is meant the policy of Edward VII to isolate Germany by surrounding her with an imperialist anti-German alliance.) In 1912, another contributor to this magazine, Eschwege, to whom we have already referred, wrote an article entiled "Plutocracy and Bureaucracy," in which he exposes the case of a German official named Volker, who was a zealous member of the Cartel Committee and who, some time later, obtained a lucrative post in the biggest cartel, *i.e.*, the Steel Syndicate.*** Similar cases, by no means casual, forced this bourgeois author to admit that "the economic liberty guaranteed by the German Constitution has become in many departments of economic life, a meaningless phrase" and that under the existing rule of the plutocracy, "even the widest political liberty cannot save us from being converted into a nation of unfree people."****

As for Russia, we will content ourselves by quoting one example. Some years ago, all the newspapers announced that Davidov, the director of the Credit Department of the Treasury, had resigned his post to take employment with a certain big bank at a salary which, according to the contract, was to amount to over one million rubles in the course of several years. The function of the Credit Department is to "co-ordinate the activities of all the credit institutions of the country"; it also grants subsidies to banks

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* A. Lansburgh, *Der Zug zur Bank (The Attraction of the Bank)*, in *Die Bank*, 1909, I, p. 79.

** *Ibid.*, p. 301.

*** *Die Bank*, 1912, II, p. 825.—*Ed.*

**** *Ibid.*, 1913, II, p. 962.

in St. Petersburg and Moscow amounting to between 800 and 1,000 million rubles.*

It is characteristic of capitalism in general that the ownership of capital is separated from the application of capital to production, that money capital is separated from industrial or productive capital, and that the rentier who lives entirely on income obtained from money capital, is separated from the entrepreneur and from all who are directly concerned in the management of capital. Imperialism, or the domination of finance capital, is that highest stage of capitalism in which this separation reaches vast proportions. The supremacy of finance capital over all other forms of capital means the predominance of the rentier and of the financial oligarchy; it means the crystallization of a small number of financially "powerful" states from among all the rest. The extent to which this process is going on may be judged from the statistics on emissions, i.e., the issue of all kinds of securities.

In the Bulletin of the International Statistical Institute, A. Neymarck** has published very comprehensive and complete comparative figures covering the issue of securities all over the world, which have been repeatedly quoted in part in economic literature. The following are the totals he gives for four decades:

TOTAL ISSUES IN BILLIONS OF FRANCS

(Decades)	
1871-1880	76.1
1881-1890	64.5
1891-1900	100.4
1901-1910	197.8

In the 1870's, the total amount of issues for the whole world was high, owing particularly to the loans floated in connection with the Franco-Prussian War, and the company-promoting boom which set in in Germany after the war. In general, the increase is not very rapid during the three last decades of the nineteenth century, and only in the first ten years of the twentieth century is an enormous increase observed of almost 100 per cent. Thus the beginning of the twentieth century marks the turning point, not only in regard to the growth of monopolies (cartels, syndicates, trusts), of which we have already spoken, but also in regard to the development of finance capital.

* E. Agahd, *op. cit.*, pp. 201 and 202.

** A. Neymarck, *Bulletin de l'institut international de statistique (Bulletin on the International Statistical Institute)*, Vol. XIX, Book II, The Hague, 1912. Data concerning small states, second column, are approximately calculated by adding 20 per cent to the 1902 figures.

Neymarck estimates the total amount of issued securities current in the world in 1910 at about 815,000,000,000 francs. Deducting from this amount which might have been duplicated, he reduces the total to 575-600,000,000,000 which is distributed among the various countries as follows: (We will take 600,000,000,000.)

FINANCIAL SECURITIES CURRENT IN 1910
(in billions of francs)

Great Britain	142	479 (Great Britain, United States, France)
United States	132	
France	110	
Germany	95	
Russia	31	
Austria-Hungary	24	
Italy	14	
Japan	12	
Holland	12.5	
Belgium	7.5	
Spain	7.5	
Switzerland	6.25	
Denmark	3.75	
Sweden, Norway, Rumania, etc.	2.5	
Total	600.00	

From these figures we at once see standing out in sharp relief four of the richest capitalist countries, each of which controls securities to amounts ranging from 100 to 150 billion francs. Two of these countries, England and France, are the oldest capitalist countries, and, as we shall see, possess the most colonies; the other two, the United States and Germany, are in the front rank as regards rapidity of development and the degree of extension of capitalist monopolies in industry. Together, these four countries own 479,000,000,000 francs, that is, nearly 80 per cent of the world's finance capital. Thus, in one way or another, nearly the whole world is more or less the debtor to and tributary of these four international banker countries, the four "pillars" of world finance capital.

It is particularly important to examine the part which export of capital plays in creating the international network of dependence and ties of finance capital.

IV. THE EXPORT OF CAPITAL

Under the old capitalism, when free competition prevailed, the export of *goods* was the most typical feature. Under modern capitalism, when monopolies prevail, the export of *capital* has become the typical feature.

Capitalism is commodity production at the highest stage of development, when labour power itself becomes a commodity. The growth of internal exchange, and particularly of international exchange, is the char-

acteristic distinguishing feature of capitalism. The uneven and spasmodic character of the development of individual enterprises, of individual branches of industry and individual countries, is inevitable under the capitalist system. England became a capitalist country before any other, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, having adopted free trade, claimed to be the "workshop of the world," the great purveyor of manufactured goods to all countries, which in exchange were to keep her supplied with raw materials. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, *this* monopoly was already undermined. Other countries, protecting themselves by tariff walls, had developed into independent capitalist states. On the threshold of the twentieth century, we see a new type of monopoly coming into existence. Firstly, there are monopolist capitalist combines in all advanced capitalist countries; secondly, a few rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital reaches gigantic proportions, occupy a monopolist position. An enormous "super-abundance of capital" has accumulated in the advanced countries.

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today lags far behind industry everywhere, if it could raise the standard of living of the masses, who are everywhere still poverty-stricken and underfed, in spite of the amazing advance in technical knowledge, there could be no talk of a superabundance of capital. This "argument" the petty-bourgeois critics of capitalism advance on every occasion. But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism; for uneven development and wretched conditions of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production. As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will never be utilized for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists; it will be used for the purpose of increasing those profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap. The possibility of exporting capital is created by the fact that numerous backward countries have been drawn into international capitalist intercourse; main railways have either been built or are being built there; the elementary conditions for industrial development have been created, etc. The necessity for exporting capital arises from the fact that in a few countries capitalism has become "over-ripe" and (owing to the backward state of agriculture and the impoverished state of the masses) capital cannot find "profitable" investment.

Here are approximate figures showing the amount of capital invested abroad by the three principal countries:*

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* Hobson, *Imperialism*, London, 1902, p. 58; Riesser, *op. cit.*, pp. 395 and 404; P. Arndt in *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv (World Economic Archive)*, Vol. VII, 1916, p. 35; Neymarck in *Bulletin de l'Institut international de statistique;* Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital*, p. 437; Lloyd George, Speech in the House of Commons, May 4,

CAPITAL INVESTED ABROAD
(In billions of francs)

Year	Great Britain	France	Germany
1862	3.6	—	—
1872	15.0	10 (1869)	—
1882	22.0	15 (1880)	?
1893	42.0	20 (1890)	?
1902	62.0	27-37	12.5
1914	75-100.0	60	44.0

This table shows that the export of capital reached formidable dimensions only in the beginning of the twentieth century. Before the war the capital invested abroad by the three principal countries amounted to between 175,000,000,000 and 200,000,000,000 francs. At the modest rate of 5 per cent, this sum should have brought in from 8 to 10 billions a year. This provided a solid basis for imperialist oppression and the exploitation of most of the countries and nations of the world; a solid basis for the capitalist parasitism of a handful of wealthy states!

How is this capital invested abroad distributed among the various countries? *Where* does it go? Only an approximate answer can be given to this question, but sufficient to throw light on certain general relations and ties of modern imperialism.

APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN CAPITAL (ABOUT 1910)
(In billions of marks)

Continent	Gr. Britain	France	Germany	Total
Europe	4	23	18	45
America	37	4	10	51
Asia, Africa and Australia .	29	8	7	44
Total	70	35	35	140

1915, reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 5, 1915; B. Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft (Problems of World Economy)*, Jena, 1912, p. 235 *et seq.*; Dr. Siegmund Schilder, *Entwicklungstendenzen der Weltwirtschaft (Trends of Development of World Economy)*, Berlin, 1912, Vol. I, p. 150; George Paish, *Great Britain's Capital Investments, etc.* in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910-11, p. 16 *et. seq.*; Georges Diouritch, *L'expansion des banques allemandes à l'étranger, ses rapports avec le développement économique de l'Allemagne (Expansion of German Banks Abroad in Connection with the Economic Development of Germany)*, Paris 1909, p. 84.

The principal spheres of investment of British capital are the British colonies, which are very large also in America (for example, Canada) not to mention Asia, etc. In this case, enormous exports of capital are bound up with the possession of enormous colonies, of the importance of which for imperialism we shall speak later. In regard to France, the situation is quite different. French capital exports are invested mainly in Europe, particularly in Russia (at least ten billion francs). This is mainly *loan* capital, in the form of government loans and not investments in industrial undertakings. Unlike British colonial imperialism, French imperialism might be termed usury imperialism. In regard to Germany, we have a third type; the German colonies are inconsiderable, and German capital invested abroad is divided fairly evenly between Europe and America.

The export of capital greatly affects and accelerates the development of capitalism in those countries to which it is exported. While, therefore, the export of capital may tend to a certain extent to arrest development in the countries exporting capital, it can only do so by expanding and deepening the further development of capitalism throughout the world.

The countries which export capital are nearly always able to obtain "advantages," the character of which throws light on the peculiarities of the epoch of finance capital and monopoly. The following passage, for in- ...ce, occurred in the Berlin review, *Die Bank*, for October 1913:

"A comedy worthy of the pen of Aristophanes is being played just now on the international capital market. Numerous foreign countries, from Spain to the Balkan states, from Russia to Argentina, Brazil and China, are openly or secretly approaching the big money markets demanding loans, some of which are very urgent. The money market is not at the moment very bright and the political outlook is not yet promising. But not a single money market dares to refuse a foreign loan for fear that its neighbour might first anticipate it and so secure some small reciprocal service. In these international transactions the creditor nearly always manages to get some special advantages: an advantage of a commercial-political nature, a coaling station, a ... ct to construct a harbour, a fat concession, or an order ...

... l has created the epoch of monopolies, and monopolies ... monopolist methods: the utilization of "connections" ...tions takes the place of competition on the open mar... ...ing is to stipulate ... part of the loan that is granted ... chases in the co... issue, particularly on orders for ships, etc. ... of the last two decades ... ...d. The export of capital ...ften resorted

... 1024-25.

abroad thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities. In these circumstances transactions between particularly big firms assume a form "bordering on corruption," as Schilder* "delicately" puts it. Krupp in Germany, Schneider in France, Armstrong in England are instances of firms which have close connections with powerful banks and governments and cannot be "ignored" when arranging a loan.

France granted loans to Russia in 1905 and by the commercial treaty of September 16, 1905, she "squeezed" concessions out of her to run till 1917. She did the same thing when the Franco-Japanese commercial treaty was concluded on August 19, 1911. The tariff war between Austria and Serbia, which lasted with a seven months' interval, from 1906 to 1911, was partly caused by competition between Austria and France for supplying Serbia with war materials. In January 1912, Paul Deschanel stated in the Chamber of Deputies that from 1908 to 1911 French firms had supplied war materials to Serbia to the value of 45,000,000 francs.

A report from the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Sao-Paulo (Brazil) states:

> "The construction of the Brazilian railways is being carried out chiefly by French, Belgian, British and German capital. In the financial operations connected with the construction of these railways the countries involved also stipulate for orders for the necessary railway materials."

Thus finance capital, almost literally, one might say, spreads its net over all countries of the world. Banks founded in the colonies, or their branches, play an important part in these operations. German imperialists look with envy on the "old" colonizing nations which are "well established" in this respect. In 1904, Great Britain had 50 colonial banks with 2,279 branches (in 1910 there were 72 banks with 5,449 branches): France had 20 with 136 branches; Holland 16 with 68 branches; and Germany had a "mere" 13 with 70 branches.** The American capitalists, in their turn, are jealous of the English and German: "In South America," they complained in 1915, "five German banks have forty branches and five English banks have seventy branches. . . . England and Germany have invested in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in the last twenty-five years approximately four thousand million dollars, and as a result enjoy together 46 per cent of the total trade of these three countries."***

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* Schilder, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 346, 349, 350 and 371.

** Riesser, *op. cit.*, fourth edition, pp. 374-75; Diouritch, p. 283.

*** *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. LIX, May 1915, p. 301. In the same volume on p. 131, we read that the well-known statistician Paish, in the last annual issue of the financial magazine *Statist*, estimated the amount of capital exported by England, Germany, France, Belgium and Holland at $40,000,000,000, *i.e.*, 200,000,000,000 francs.

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Finance capital has created the epoch of monopolies, and monopolies introduce everywhere monopolist methods: the utilization of "connections" for profitable transactions takes the place of competition on the open market. The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan that is granted shall be spent on purchases in the country of issue, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc. In the course of the last two decades (1890-1910), France often resorted to this method. The export of capital

* *Die Bank* 1913, II, pp. 1024-25.

abroad thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities. In these circumstances transactions between particularly big firms assume a form "bordering on corruption," as Schilder* "delicately" puts it. Krupp in Germany, Schneider in France, Armstrong in England are instances of firms which have close connections with powerful banks and governments and cannot be "ignored" when arranging a loan.

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The capital exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has also led to the *actual* division of the world.

V. THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG CAPITALIST COMBINES

Monopolist capitalist combines—cartels, syndicates, trusts—divide among themselves, first of all, the whole internal market of a country, and impose their control, more or less completely, upon the industry of that country. But under capitalism the home market is inevitably bound up with the foreign market. Capitalism long ago created a world market. As the export of capital increased, and as the foreign and colonial relations and the "spheres of influence" of the big monopolist combines expanded, things "naturally" gravitated towards an international agreement among these combines, and towards the formation of international cartels.

This is a new stage of world concentration of capital and production, incomparably higher than the preceding stages. Let us see how this supermonopoly develops.

The electrical industry is the most typical of the modern technical achievements of capitalism of the *end* of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. This industry has developed most in the two most advanced of the new capitalist countries, the United States and Germany. In Germany, the crisis of 1900 gave a particularly strong impetus to its concentration. During the crisis, the banks, which by this time had become fairly well merged with industry, greatly accelerated and deepened the collapse of relatively small firms and their absorption by the large ones.

> "The banks," writes Jeidels, "in refusing a helping hand to the very companies which are in greatest need of capital bring on first a frenzied boom and then the hopeless failure of the companies which have not been attached to them closely long enough."*

As a result, after 1900, concentration in Germany proceeded by leaps and bounds. Up to 1900 there had been seven or eight "groups" in the electrical industry. Each was formed of several companies (altogether there were twenty-eight) and each was supported by from two to eleven banks.

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* Jeidels, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

Between 1908 and 1912 all the groups were merged into two, or possibly one. The diagram below shows the process:

GROUPS IN THE GERMAN ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY

Prior to 1900:	Felten & Guillaume	Lahmeyer	Union A.E.G.	Siemens & Halske	Schuckert & Co.	Bergmann	Kummer
	Felten & Lahmeyer		A.E.G.	Siemens & Halske-Schuckert		Bergmann	Failed in 1900
By 1912	A.E.G. (General Electric Co.)			Siemens & Halske-Schuckert			

(In close "co-operation" since 1908)

The famous A.E.G. (General Electric Company), which grew up in this way, controls 175 to 200 companies (through shareholdings), and a total capital of approximately *1,500,000,000* marks. Abroad, it has thirty-four direct agencies, of which twelve are joint-stock companies, in more than ten countries. As early as 1904 the amount of capital invested abroad by the German electrical industry was estimated at 233,000,000 marks. Of this sum, 62,000,000 were invested in Russia. Needless to say, the A.E.G. is a huge combine. Its manufacturing companies alone number no less than sixteen, and their factories make the most varied articles, from cables and insulators to motor cars and aeroplanes.

But concentration in Europe was a part of the process of concentration in America which developed in the following way:

General Electric Company

United States:	Thomson-Houston Co. establishes a firm in Europe	Edison Co. establishes in Europe the French Edison Co. which transfers its patents to the German firm
Germany:	Union Electric Co.	Gen'l Electric Co. (A.E.G.)

General Electric Co. (A.E.G.)

Thus, *two* "Great Powers" in the electrical industry were formed. "There are no other electric companies in the world *completely* independent of them," wrote Heinig in his article "The Path of the Electric Trust."

An idea, although far from complete, of the turnover and the size of the enterprises of the two "trusts" can be obtained from the following figures:

		Turnover (Mill. marks)	No. of employees	Net profits (Mill. marks)
America: General Electric Co. (G. E. C.)	1907	252	28,000	35.4
	1910	298	32,000	45.6
Germany: General Electric Co. (A. E. G.)	1907	216	30,700	14.5
	1911	362	60,800	21.7

In 1907, the German and American trusts concluded an agreement by which they divided the world between themselves. Competition between them ceased. The American General Electric Company (G.E.C.) "got" the United States and Canada. The German General Electric Company (A.E.G.) "got" Germany, Austria, Russia, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, Turkey and the Balkans. Special agreements, naturally secret, were concluded regarding the penetration of "subsidiary" companies into new branches of industry, into "new" countries formally not yet allotted. The two trusts were to exchange inventions and experiments.*

It is easy to understand how difficult competition has become against this trust, which is practically world-wide, which controls a capital of several billion, and has its "branches," agencies, representatives, connections, etc., in every corner of the world. But the division of the world between two powerful trusts does not remove the possibility of *redivision* if the relation of forces changes as a result of uneven development, war, bankruptcy, etc.

The oil industry provides an instructive example of attempts at such a redivision, or rather of a struggle for redivision.

> "The world oil market," wrote Jeidels in 1905, "is even today divided in the main between two great financial groups—Rockefeller's American Standard Oil Co., and the controlling interests of the Russian oil fields in Baku, Rothschild and Nobel. The two groups are in close alliance. But for several years five enemies have been threatening their monopoly":**

1) The exhaustion of the American oil wells; 2) the competition of the firm of Mantashev of Baku; 3) the Austrian wells; 4) the Rumanian wells;

* Riesser, *op. cit.;* Diouritch, *op. cit.,* p. 239; Kurt Heinig, *op. cit.,* p. 474.
** Jeidels, *op. cit.,* pp. 192-93.

5) the overseas oil fields, particularly in the Dutch colonies (the extremely rich firms, Samuel and Shell, also connected with British capital). The three last groups are connected with the great German banks, principally, the Deutsche Bank. These banks independently and systematically developed the oil industry in Rumania, in order to have a foothold of their "own." In 1907, 185,000,000 francs of foreign capital were invested in the Rumanian oil industry, of which 74,000,000 came from Germany.*

A struggle began, which in economic literature is fittingly called "the struggle for the division of the world." On one side, the Rockefeller trust wishing to conquer *everything*, formed a subsidiary company *right in* Holland, and bought up oil wells in the Dutch Indies, in order to strike at its principal enemy, the Anglo-Dutch Shell trust. On the other side, the Deutsche Bank and the other German banks aimed at "retaining" Rumania "for themselves" and at uniting it with Russia against Rockefeller. The latter controlled far more capital and an excellent system of oil transport and distribution. The struggle had to end, and did end in 1907, with the utter defeat of the Deutsche Bank, which was confronted with the alternative: either to liquidate its oil business and lose millions, or to submit. It chose to submit, and concluded a very disadvantageous agreement with the American trust. The Deutsche Bank agreed "not to attempt anything which might injure American interests." Provision was made, however, for the annulment of the agreement in the event of Germany establishing a state oil monopoly.

Then the "comedy of oil" began. One of the German finance kings, von Gwinner, a director of the Deutsche Bank, began through his private secretary, Stauss, a campaign *for* a state oil monopoly. The gigantic machine of the big German bank and all its wide "connections" were set in motion. The press bubbled over with "patriotic" indignation against the "yoke" of the American trust, and, on March 15, 1911, the Reichstag by an almost unanimous vote, adopted a motion asking the government to introduce a bill for the establishment of an oil monopoly. The government seized upon this "popular" idea, and the game of the Deutsche Bank, which hoped to cheat its American partner and improve its business by a state monopoly, appeared to have been won. The German oil magnates saw visions of wonderful profits, which would not be less than those of the Russian sugar refiners.... But, firstly, the big German banks quarrelled among themselves over the division of the spoils. The Disconto-Gesellschaft exposed the covetous aims of the Deutsche Bank; secondly, the government took fright at the prospect of a struggle with Rockefeller; it was doubtful whether Germany could be sure of obtaining oil from other sources. (The Rumanian output was small.) Thirdly, just at that time the 1913 credits of a billion marks were voted for Germany's war preparations. The project

* Diouritch, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

of the oil monopoly was postponed. The Rockefeller trust came out of the struggle, for the time being, victorious.

The Berlin review, *Die Bank*, said in this connection that Germany could only fight the oil trust by establishing an electricity monopoly and by converting water power into cheap electricity.

> "But," the author added, "the electricity monopoly will come when the producers need it, that is to say, on the eve of the next great crash in the electrical industry, and when the powerful, expensive electric stations which are now being put up at great cost everywhere by private electrical concerns, which obtain partial monopolies from the state, from towns, etc., can no longer work at a profit. Water power will then have to be used. But it will be impossible to convert it into cheap electricity at state expense; it will have to be handed over to a 'private monopoly controlled by the state,' because of the immense compensation and damages that would have to be paid to private industry.... So it was with the nitrate monopoly, so it is with the oil monopoly; so it will be with the electric power monopoly. It is time for our state socialists, who allow themselves to be blinded by beautiful principles, to understand once and for all that in Germany monopolies have never pursued the aim, nor have they had the result, of benefiting the consumer, or of handing over to the state part of the *entrepreneurs*' profits; they have served only to facilitate at the expense of the state, the recovery of private industries which were on the verge of bankruptcy."*

Such are the valuable admissions which the German bourgeois economists are forced to make. We see plainly here how private monopolies and state monopolies are bound up together in the age of finance capital; how both are but separate links in the imperialist struggle between the big monopolists for the division of the world.

In mercantile shipping, the tremendous development of concentration has ended also in the division of the world. In Germany two powerful companies have raised themselves to first rank, the Hamburg-Amerika and the Norddeutscher Lloyd, each having a capital of 200,000,000 marks (in stocks and bonds) and possessing 185 to 189 million marks worth of shipping tonnage. On the other side, in America, on January 1, 1903, the Morgan trust, the International Mercantile Marine Co., was formed which united nine British and American steamship companies, and which controlled a capital of 120,000,000 dollars (480,000,000 marks). As early as 1903, the German giants and the Anglo-American trust concluded an agreement and divided the world in accordance with the division of profits. The German companies undertook not to compete in the Anglo-American traffic. The

* *Die Bank*, 1912, p. 1036; *cf.* also 1912, II, p. 629 *et seq.*; 1913, I, p. 388.

ports were "carefully "allotted" to each; a joint committee of control was set up, etc. This contract was concluded for twenty years, with the prudent provision for its annulment in the event of war.*

Extremely instructive also is the story of the creation of the International Rail Cartel. The first attempt of the British, Belgian and German rail manufacturers to create such a cartel was made as early as 1884, at the time of a severe industrial depression. The manufacturers agreed not to compete with one another for the home markets of the countries involved, and they divided the foreign markets in the following quotas: Great Britain 66 per cent; Germany 27 per cent; Belgium 7 per cent. India was reserved entirely for Great Britain. Joint war was declared against a British firm which remained outside the cartel. The cost of this economic war was met by a percentage levy on all sales. But in 1886 the cartel collapsed when two British firms retired from it. It is characteristic that agreement could not be achieved in the period of industrial prosperity which followed.

At the beginning of 1904, the German steel syndicate was formed. In November 1904, the International Rail Cartel was revived, with the following quotas for foreign trade: England 53.5 per cent; Germany 28.83 per cent; Belgium 17.67 per cent. France came in later with 4.8 per cent, 5.8 per cent and 6.4 per cent in the first, second and third years respectively, in excess of the 100 per cent limit, *i.e.*, when the total was 104.8 per cent, etc. In 1905, the United States Steel Corporation entered the cartel; then Austria; then Spain.

> "At the present time," wrote Vogelstein in 1910, "the division of the world is completed, and the big consumers, primarily the state railways—since the world has been parcelled out without consideration for their interests—can now dwell like the poet in the heaven of Jupiter."**

We will mention also the International Zinc Syndicate, established in 1909, which carefully apportioned output among three groups of factories: German, Belgian, French, Spanish and British.

Then there is the International Dynamite Trust, of which Liefmann says that it is

> "quite a modern, close alliance of all the German manufacturers of explosives who, with the French and American dynamite manufacturers who have organized in a similar manner, have divided the whole world among themselves, so to speak."***

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* Riesser, *op. cit.*, third edition, pp. 114-16.

** Th. Vogelstein, *Organisationsformen (Forms of Organization)*, p. 100.

*** R. Liefmann, *Kartelle und Trusts,* second edition, p. 161.

Liefmann calculated that in 1897 there were altogether about forty international cartels in which Germany had a share, while in 1910 there were about a hundred.

Certain bourgeois writers (with whom K. Kautsky, who has completely abandoned the Marxist position he held, for example, in 1909, has now associated himself) express the opinion that international cartels are the most striking expressions of the internationalization of capital, and, therefore, give the hope of peace among nations under capitalism. Theoretically, this opinion is absurd, while in practice it is sophistry and a dishonest defence of the worst opportunism. International cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed, and they *reveal the object* of the struggle between the various capitalist groups. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historico-economic significance of events; for the *forms* of the struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively particular, and temporary causes, but the *essence* of the struggle, its class *content, cannot* change while classes exist. It is easy to understand, for example, that it is in the interests of the German bourgeoisie, whose theoretical arguments have now been adopted by Kautsky (we will deal with this later), to obscure the *content* of the present economic struggle (the division of the world) and to emphasize this or that *form* of the struggle. Kautsky makes the same mistake. Of course, we have in mind not only the German bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie all over the world. The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to get profits. And they divide it in proportion to "capital," in proportion to "strength," because there cannot be any other system of division under commodity production and capitalism. But strength varies with the degree of economic and political development. In order to understand what takes place, it is necessary to know what questions are settled by this change of forces. The question as to whether these changes are "purely" economic or *non*-economic (*e.g.*, military) is a secondary one, which does not in the least affect the fundamental view on the latest epoch of capitalism. To substitute for the question of the *content* of the struggle and agreements between capitalist combines the question of the form of these struggles and agreements (today peaceful, tomorrow war-like, the next day war-like again) is to sink to the role of a sophist.

The epoch of modern capitalism shows us that certain relations are established between capitalist alliances, *based* on the economic division of the world; while parallel with this fact and in connection with it, certain relations are established between political alliances, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the "struggle for economic territory."

VI. THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG THE GREAT POWERS

In his book, *The Territorial Development of the European Colonies*, A. Supan,* the geographer, gives the following brief summary of this development at the end of the nineteenth century:

PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORIES BELONGING TO THE EUROPEAN COLONIAL POWERS (INCLUDING UNITED STATES)

	1876	1900	Increase or decrease
Africa	10.8	90.4	+79.6
Polynesia	56.8	98.9	+42.1
Asia	51.5	56.6	+ 5.1
Australia	100.0	100.0	—
America	27.5	27.2	— 0.3

"The characteristic feature of this period," he concludes, "is, therefore, the division of Africa and Polynesia."

As there are no unoccupied territories—that is, territories that do not belong to any state—in Asia and America, Mr. Supan's conclusion must be carried further, and we must say that the characteristic feature of this period is the final partition of the globe—not in the sense that a *new partition* is impossible—on the contrary, new partitions are possible and inevitable—but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has *completed* the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up, so *that in the future only* redivision is possible; territories can only pass from one "owner" to another, instead of passing as unowned territory to an "owner."

Hence, we are passing through a peculiar period of world colonial policy, which is closely associated with the "latest stage in the development of capitalism," with finance capital. For this reason, it is essential first of all to deal in detail with the facts, in order to ascertain exactly what distinguishes this period from those preceding it, and what the present situation is. In the first place, two questions of fact arise here. Is an intensification of colonial policy, an intensification of the struggle for colonies, observed precisely in this period of finance capital? And how, in this respect, is the world divided at the present time?

* A. Supan, *Die territoriale Entwicklung der europäischen Kolonien*. Gotha, 1906, p. 254.

To tabulate as exactly as possible the territorial division of the world, and the changes which have occurred during the last decades, we will take the data furnished by Supan in the work already quoted on the colonial possession of all the powers of the world. Supan examines the years 1876 and 1900; we will take the year 1876—a year aptly selected, for it is precisely at that time that the pre-monopolist stage of development of West European capitalism can be said to have been completed, in the main, and we will take the year 1914, and in place of Supan's figures we will quote the more recent statistic of Hubner's *Geographical and Statistical Tables.* Supan gives figures only for colonies: we think it useful in order to present a complete picture of the division of the world to add brief figures on non-colonial and semi-colonial countries like Persia, China and Turkey. Persia is already almost completely a colony; China and Turkey are on the way to becoming colonies. We thus get the following summary:

COLONIAL POSSESSIONS OF THE GREAT POWERS
(Million square kilometres and million inhabitants)

	Colonies				Home countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.6	11.1	95.1
Germany	—	—	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
U.S.A.	—	—	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Japan	—	—	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
Total for 6 Great Powers	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2	81.5	960.6
Colonies of other powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.)							9.9	45.3
Semi-colonial countries (Persia, China, Turkey)							14.5	361.2
Other countries							28.0	289.9
Total area and population of the world							133.9	1,657.0

We see from these figures how "complete" was the partition of the world at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. After 1876 colonial possessions increase to an enormous degree, more than one and a half times, from 40,000,000 to 65,000,000 square kilometres in area

for the six biggest powers, an increase of 25,000,000 square kilometres, that is, one and a half times greater than the area of the "home" countries, which have a total of 16,500,000 square kilometres. In 1876 three powers had no colonies, and a fourth, France, had scarcely any. In 1914 these four powers had 14,100,000 square kilometres of colonies, or an area one and a half times greater than that of Europe, with a population of nearly 100,000,000. The unevenness in the rate of expansion of colonial possessions is very marked. If, for instance, we compare France, Germany and Japan, which do not differ very much in area and population, we will see that the first has annexed almost three times as much colonial territory as the other two combined. In regard to finance capital, also, France, at the beginning of the period we are considering, was perhaps several times richer than Germany and Japan put together. In addition to, and on the basis of, purely economic causes, geographical conditions and other factors also affect the dimensions of colonial possessions. However strong the process of levelling the world, of levelling the economic and living conditions in different countries, may have been in the past decades as a result of the pressure of large-scale industry, exchange and finance capital, great differences still remain; and among the six powers, we see, firstly, young capitalist powers (America, Germany, Japan) which progressed very rapidly; secondly, countries with an old capitalist development (France and Great Britain), which, of late, have made much slower progress than the previously mentioned countries, and thirdly, a country (Russia) which is economically most backward, in which modern capitalist imperialism is enmeshed, so to speak, in a particularly close network of pre-capitalist relations.

Alongside the colonial possessions of these great powers, we have placed the small colonies of the small states, which are, so to speak, the next possible and probable objects of a new colonial "share-out." Most of these little states are able to retain their colonies only because of the conflicting interests, frictions, etc., among the big powers, which prevent them from coming to an agreement in regard to the division of the spoils. The "semi-colonial states" provide an example of the transitional forms which are to be found in all spheres of nature and society. Finance capital is such a great, it may be said, such a decisive force in all economic and international relations, that it is capable of subordinating to itself, and actually does subordinate to itself even states enjoying complete political independence. We shall shortly see examples of this. Naturally, however, finance capital finds it most "convenient," and is able to extract the greatest profit from a subordination which involves the loss of the political independence of the subjected countries and peoples. In this connection, the semi-colonial countries provide a typical example of the "middle stage." It is natural that the struggle for these semi-dependent countries should have become particularly bitter during the period of finance capital, when the rest of the world had already been divided up.

The American writer, Morris, in his book on the history of colonization,* has made an attempt to compile data on the colonial possessions of Great Britain, France and Germany during different periods of the nineteenth century. The following is a brief summary of the results he has obtained:

COLONIAL POSSESSIONS

(Million square miles and million inhabitants)

	Great Britain		France		Germany	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
1815-30	?	126.4	0.02	0.5	—	—
1860	2.5	145.1	0.2	3.4	—	—
1880	7.7	267.9	0.7	7.5	—	—
1899	9.3	309.0	3.7	56.4	1.0	14.7

For Great Britain, the period of the enormous expansion of colonial conquests is that between 1860 and 1880, and it was also very considerable in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. For France and Germany this period falls precisely in these last twenty years. We saw above that the apex of pre-monopoly capitalist development, of capitalism in which free competition was predominant, was reached in the sixties and seventies of the last century. We now see that it is *precisely after that period* that the "boom" in colonial annexations begins, and that the struggle for the territorial division of the world becomes extraordinarily keen. It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is *bound up* with the intensification of the struggle for the partition of the world.

Hobson, in his work on imperialism, marks the years 1884-1900 as the period of the intensification of the colonial "expansion" of the chief European states. According to his estimate, Great Britain during these years acquired 3,700,000 square miles of territory with a population of 57,000,000; France acquired 3,600,000 square miles with a population of 36,500,000; Germany 1,000,000 square miles with a population of 16,700,000; Belgium 900,000 square miles with 30,000,000 inhabitants; Portugal 800,000 square miles with 9,000,000 inhabitants. The quest for colonies by all the capitalist states at the end of the nineteenth century and particularly since the 1880's is a commonly known fact in the history of diplomacy and of foreign affairs.

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* Henry C Morris, *The History of Colonization,* New York, 1900, II, p. 88; I, pp. 304, 419.

When free competition in Great Britain was at its zenith, *i.e.*, between 1840 and 1860, the leading British bourgeois politicians were opposed to colonial policy and were of the opinion that the liberation of the colonies and their complete separation from Britain was inevitable and desirable. M. Beer, in an article, "Modern British Imperialism,"* published in 1898, shows that in 1852, Disraeli, a statesman generally inclined towards imperialism, declared: "The colonies are millstones round our necks." But at the end of the nineteenth century the heroes of the hour in England were Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, open advocates of imperialism, who applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner.

It is not without interest to observe that even at that time these leading British bourgeois politicians fully appreciated the connection between what might be called the purely economic and the politico-social roots of modern imperialism. Chamberlain advocated imperialism by calling it a "true, wise and economical policy," and he pointed particularly to the German, American and Belgian competition which Great Britain was encountering in the world market. Salvation lies in monopolies, said the capitalists as they formed cartels, syndicates and trusts. Salvation lies in monopolies, echoed the political leaders of the bourgeoisie, hastening to appropriate the parts of the world not yet shared out. The journalist, Stead, relates the following remarks uttered by his close friend Cecil Rhodes, in 1895, regarding his imperialist ideas:

> "I was in the East End of London yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread,' 'bread,' 'bread,' and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, *i.e.*, in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced by them in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists."**

This is what Cecil Rhodes, millionaire, king of finance, the man who was mainly responsible for the Boer War, said in 1895. His defence of imperialism is just crude and cynical, but in substance it does not differ from the "theory" advocated by Messrs. Maslov, Südekum, Potresov, David and the founder of Russian Marxism and others. Cecil Rhodes was a somewhat more honest social-chauvinist.

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* *Die Neue Zeit,* XVI, I, 1898, p. 302.

** *Ibid.*, p. 304.

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for the six biggest powers, an increase of 25,000,000 square kilometres, that is, one and a half times greater than the area of the "home" countries, which have a total of 16,500,000 square kilometres. In 1876 three powers had no colonies, and a fourth, France, had scarcely any. In 1914 these four powers had 14,100,000 square kilometres of colonies, or an area one and a half times greater than that of Europe, with a population of nearly 100,000,000. The unevenness in the rate of expansion of colonial possessions is very marked. If, for instance, we compare France, Germany and Japan, which do not differ very much in area and population, we will see that the first has annexed almost three times as much colonial territory as the other two combined. In regard to finance capital, also, France, at the beginning of the period we are considering, was perhaps several times richer than Germany and Japan put together. In addition to, and on the basis of, purely economic causes, geographical conditions and other factors also affect the dimensions of colonial possessions. However strong the process of levelling the world, of levelling the economic and living conditions in different countries, may have been in the past decades as a result of the pressure of large-scale industry, exchange and finance capital, great differences still remain; and among the six powers, we see, firstly, young capitalist powers (America, Germany, Japan) which progressed very rapidly; secondly, countries with an old capitalist development (France and Great Britain), which, of late, have made much slower progress than the previously mentioned countries, and thirdly, a country (Russia) which is economically most backward, in which modern capitalist imperialism is enmeshed, so to speak, in a particularly close network of pre-capitalist relations.

Alongside the colonial possessions of these great powers, we have placed the small colonies of the small states, which are, so to speak, the next possible and probable objects of a new colonial "share-out." Most of these little states are able to retain their colonies only because of the conflicting interests, frictions, etc., among the big powers, which prevent them from coming to an agreement in regard to the division of the spoils. The "semi-colonial states" provide an example of the transitional forms which are to be found in all spheres of nature and society. Finance capital is such a great, it may be said, such a decisive force in all economic and international relations, that it is capable of subordinating to itself, and actually does subordinate to itself even states enjoying complete political independence. We shall shortly see examples of this. Naturally, however, finance capital finds it most "convenient," and is able to extract the greatest profit from a subordination which involves the loss of the political independence of the subjected countries and peoples. In this connection, the semi-colonial countries provide a typical example of the "middle stage." It is natural that the struggle for these semi-dependent countries should have become particularly bitter during the period of finance capital, when the rest of the world had already been divided up.

To tabulate as exactly as possible the territorial division of the world, and the changes which have occurred during the last decades, we will take the data furnished by Supan in the work already quoted on the colonial possession of all the powers of the world. Supan examines the years 1876 and 1900; we will take the year 1876—a year aptly selected, for it is precisely at that time that the pre-monopolist stage of development of West European capitalism can be said to have been completed, in the main, and we will take the year 1914, and in place of Supan's figures we will quote the more recent statistic of Hubner's *Geographical and Statistical Tables.* Supan gives figures only for colonies: we think it useful in order to present a complete picture of the division of the world to add brief figures on non-colonial and semi-colonial countries like Persia, China and Turkey. Persia is already almost completely a colony; China and Turkey are on the way to becoming colonies. We thus get the following summary:

COLONIAL POSSESSIONS OF THE GREAT POWERS
(Million square kilometres and million inhabitants)

	Colonies				Home countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.6	11.1	95.1
Germany	—	—	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
U S.A.	—	—	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Japan	—	—	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
Total for 6 Great Powers	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2	81.5	960.6
Colonies of other powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.)							9.9	45.3
Semi-colonial countries (Persia, China, Turkey)							14.5	361.2
Other countries							28.0	289.9
Total area and population of the world							133.9	1,657.0

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Colonial policy and imperialism existed before this latest stage of capitalism, and even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and achieved imperialism. But "general" arguments about imperialism, which ignore, or put into the background the fundamental difference of social-economic systems, inevitably degenerate into absolutely empty banalities, or into grandiloquent comparisons like: "Greater Rome and Greater Britain."* Even the colonial policy of capitalism in its *previous* stages is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital.

The principal feature of modern capitalism is the domination of monopolist combines of the big capitalists. These monopolies are most firmly established when *all* the sources of raw materials are controlled by the one group. And we have seen with what zeal the international capitalist combines exert every effort to make it impossible for their rivals to compete with them; for example, by buying up mineral lands, oil fields, etc. Colonial possession alone gives complete guarantee of success to the monopolies against all the risks of the struggle with competitors, including the risk that the latter will defend themselves by means of a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more the need for raw materials is felt, the more bitter competition becomes, and the more feverishly the hunt for raw materials proceeds throughout the whole world, the more desperate becomes the struggle for the acquisition of colonies.

Schilder writes:

> "It may even be asserted, although it may sound paradoxical to some, that in the more or less discernible future the growth of the urban and industrial population is more likely to be hindered by a shortage of raw materials for industry than by a shortage of food."

For example, there is a growing shortage of timber—the price of which is steadily rising—of leather, and raw materials for the textile industry.

> "As instances of the efforts of associations of manufacturers to create an equilibrium between industry and agriculture in world economy as a whole, we might mention the International Federation of Cotton Spinners' Associations in the most important industrial countries, founded in 1904, and the European Federation of Flax Spinners' Associations, founded on the same model in 1910."**

The bourgeois reformists, and among them particularly the present-day adherents of Kautsky, of course, try to belittle the importance of facts of

* A reference to the book by C. P. Lucas, *Greater Rome and Greater Britain*, Oxford, 1912, or the Earl of Cromer's *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, London, 1910.

** Schilder, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 and 42.

this kind by arguing that it "would be possible" to obtain raw materials in the open market without a "costly and dangerous" colonial policy; and that it would be "possible" to increase the supply of raw materials to an enormous extent "simply" by improving agriculture. But these arguments are merely an apology for imperialism, an attempt to embellish it, because they ignore the principal feature of modern capitalism, monopoly. Free markets are becoming more and more a thing of the past; monopolist syndicates and trusts are restricting them more and more every day, and "simply" improving agriculture reduces itself to improving the conditions of the masses, to raising wages and reducing profits. Where, except in the imagination of the sentimental reformists, are there any trusts capable of interesting themselves in the condition of the masses instead of the conquest of colonies?

Finance capital is not only interested in the already known sources of raw materials; it is also interested in potential sources of raw materials, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, and because land which is useless today may be made fertile to-morrow if new methods are applied (to devise these new methods a big bank can equip a whole expedition of engineers, agricultural experts, etc.), and large amounts of capital are invested. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of working up and utilizing raw materials, etc., etc. Hence, the inevitable striving of finance capital to extend its economic territory and even its territory in general. In the same way that the trusts capitalize their property by estimating it at two or three times its value, taking into account its "potential" (and not present) returns, and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital strives to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds and in any place it can, and by any means, counting on the possibilities of finding raw materials there, and fearing to be left behind in the insensate struggle for the last available scraps of undivided territory, or for the repartition of that which has been already divided.

The British capitalists are exerting every effort to develop cotton growing in *their* colony, Egypt (in 1904, out of 2,300,000 hectares of land under cultivation, 600,000 or more than one-fourth, were devoted to cotton growing); the Russians are doing the same in *their* colony, Turkestan; and they are doing so because in this way they will be in a better position to defeat their foreign competitors, to monopolize the sources of raw materials and form a more economical and profitable textile trust in which *all* the processes of cotton production and manufacturing will be "combined" and concentrated in the hands of a single owner.

The necessity of exporting capital also gives an impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier to eliminate competition, to make sure of orders, to strengthen the necessary "connections," etc., by monopolist methods (and sometimes it is the only possible way).

The non-economic superstructure which grows up on the basis of finance

capital, its politics and its ideology, stimulates the striving for colonial conquest. "Finance capital does not want liberty, it wants domination," as Hilferding very truly says. And a French bourgeois writer, developing and supplementing, as it were, the ideas of Cecil Rhodes, which we quoted above,* writes that social causes should be added to the economic causes of modern colonial policy.

"Owing to the growing difficulties of life which weigh not only on the masses of the workers, but also on the middle classes, impatience, irritation and hatred are accumulating in all the countries of the old civilization and are becoming a menace to public order; employment must be found for the energy which is being hurled out of the definite class channel: it must be given an outlet abroad in order to avert an explosion at home."**

Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the period of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its corresponding foreign policy, which reduces itself to the struggle of the Great Powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of *transitional* forms of national dependence. The division of the world into two main groups—of colony-owning countries on the one hand and colonies on the other—is not the only typical feature of this period; there is also a variety of forms of dependent countries; countries which, officially, are politically independent, but which are, in fact, enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence. We have already referred to one form of dependence—the semi-colony. Another example is provided by Argentina.

"South America, and especially Argentina," writes Schulze-Gaevernitz in his work on British imperialism, "is so dependent financially on London that it ought to be described as almost a British commercial colony."***

Basing himself on the report of the Austro-Hungarian consul at Buenos Aires for 1909, Schilder estimates the amount of British capital invested in Argentina at 8,750,000,000 francs. It is not difficult to imagine the solid bonds that are thus created between British finance capital (and its faithful "friend," diplomacy) and the Argentine bourgeoisie, with the leading businessmen and politicians of that country.

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* See this volume p. 687.—*Ed.*

** Wahl, *La France aux colonies (France in the Colonies)*, quoted by Henri Russier, *Le partage de l'Océanie (The Partition of Oceania)*, Paris, 1905, pp. 165-66.

*** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel zu Beginn des 20 Jahrhunderts (British Imperialism and English Free Trade at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century)*, Leipzig, 1906, p. 318. Sartorius von Waltershausen says the same in Das *volkswirtschaftliche System der Kapitalanlage im Auslande (The National Economic System of Capital Investments Abroad)*, *Berlin*, 1907, p. 46.

A somewhat different form of financial and diplomatic dependence, accompanied by political independence, is presented by Portugal. Portugal is an independent sovereign state. In actual fact, however, for more than two hundred years, since the war of the Spanish Succession (1700-14), it has been a British protectorate. Great Britain has protected Portugal and her colonies in order to fortify her own positions in the fight against her rivals, Spain and France. In return she has received commercial advantages, preferential import of goods, and, above all, of capital into Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, the right to use the ports and islands of Portugal, her telegraph cables, etc.* Relations of this kind have always existed between big and little states. But during the period of capitalist imperialism they become a general system, they form part of the process of "dividing the world," they become a link in the chain of operations of world finance capital.

In order to complete our examination of the question of the division of the world, we must make the following observation. This question was raised quite openly and definitely not only in American literature after the Spanish-American War, and in English literature after the Boer War, at the very end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth; not only has German literature, which always "jealously" watches "British imperialism," systematically given its appraisal of this fact, but it has also been raised in French bourgeois literature in terms as wide and clear as they can be made from the bourgeois point of view. We will quote Driault, the historian, who, in his book, *Political and Social Problems at the End of the Nineteenth Century*, in the chapter "The Great Powers and the Division of the World," wrote the following:

> "During recent years, all the free territory of the globe, with the exception of China, has been occupied by the powers of Europe and North America. Several conflicts and displacements of influence have already occurred over this matter, which foreshadow more terrible outbreaks in the near future. For it is necessary to make haste. The nations which have not yet made provision for themselves run the risk of never receiving their share and never participating in the tremendous exploitation of the globe which will be one of the essential features of the next century" (*i.e.*, the twentieth). "That is why all Europe and America has lately been afflicted with the fever of colonial expansion, of 'imperialism,' that most characteristic feature of the end of the nineteenth century."

And the author added:

> "In this partition of the world, in this furious pursuit of the treasures and of the big markets of the globe, the relative power of the

* Schilder, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 160-61.

empires founded in this nineteenth century is totally out of proportion to the place occupied in Europe by the nations which founded them. The dominant powers in Europe, those which decide the destinies of the Continent, are *not* equally preponderant in the whole world. And, as colonial power, the hope of controlling hitherto unknown wealth, will obviously react to influence the relative strength of the European powers; the colonial question—'imperialism,' if you will—which has already modified the political conditions of Europe, will modify them more and more."*

VII. IMPERIALISM AS A SPECIAL STAGE OF CAPITALISM

We must now try to sum up and put together what has been said above on the subject of imperialism. Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental attributes of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental attributes began to be transformed into their opposites, when the features of a period of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system began to take shape and reveal themselves all along the line. Economically, the main thing in this process is the substitution of capitalist monopolies for capitalist free competition. Free competition is the fundamental attribute of capitalism, and of commodity production generally. Monopoly is exactly the opposite of free competition; but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and eliminating small industry, replacing large-scale industry by still larger-scale industry, finally leading to such a concentration of production and capital that monopoly has been and is the result: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks manipulating thousands of millions. At the same time monopoly, which has grown out of free competition, does not abolish the latter, but exists over it and alongside of it, and thereby gives rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, friction and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist combines of manufacturers; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unoccupied by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolistic

* Ed. Driault, *Problèmes politiques et sociaux*, Paris, 1907, p. 299.

possession of the territory of the world which has been completely divided up.

But very brief definitions, although convenient, for they sum up the main points, are nevertheless inadequate, because very important features of the phenomenon that has to be defined have to be especially deduced. And so, without forgetting the conditional and relative value of all definitions, which can never include all the concatenations of a phenomenon in its complete development, we must give a definition of imperialism that will embrace the following five essential features:

1) The concentration of production and capital developed to such a high stage that it created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life.

2) The merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this "finance capital," of a financial oligarchy.

3) The export of capital, which has become extremely important, as distinguished from the export of commodities.

4) The formation of international capitalist monopolies which share the world among themselves.

5) The territorial division of the whole world among the greatest capitalist powers is completed.

Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the great capitalist powers has been completed.

We shall see later that imperialism can and must be defined differently if consideration is to be given, not only to the basic, purely economic factors—to which the above definition is limited—but also to the historical place of this stage of capitalism in relation to capitalism in general, or to the relations between imperialism and the two main trends in the working-class movement. The point to be noted just now is that imperialism, as interpreted above, undoubtedly represents a special stage in the development of capitalism. In order to enable the reader to obtain as well grounded an idea of imperialism as possible, we deliberately quoted largely from *bourgeois* economists who are obliged to admit the particularly incontrovertible facts regarding modern capitalist economy. With the same object in view, we have produced detailed statistics which reveal the extent to which bank capital, etc., has developed, showing how the transformation of quantity into quality, of developed capitalism into imperialism, has expressed itself. Needless to say, all boundaries in nature and in society are conditional and changeable, and, consequently, it would be absurd to discuss the exact year or the decade in which imperialism "definitely" became established.

In this matter of defining imperialism, however, we have to enter into controversy, primarily, with K. Kautsky, the principal Marxian theoretician of the epoch of the so-called Second International—that is, of the twenty-five years between 1889 and 1914.

Kautsky, in 1915 and even in November 1914, very emphatically attacked the fundamental ideas expressed in our definition of imperialism. Kautsky said that imperialism must not be regarded as a "phase" or stage of economy, but as a policy; a definite policy "preferred" by finance capital; that imperialism cannot be "identified" with "contemporary capitalism"; that if imperialism is to be understood to mean "all the phenomena of contemporary capitalism"—cartels, protection, the domination of the financiers and colonial policy—then the question as to whether imperialism is necessary to capitalism becomes reduced to the "flattest tautology"; because, in that case, "imperialism is naturally a vital necessity for capitalism," and so on. The best way to present Kautsky's ideas is to quote his own definition of imperialism, which is diametrically opposed to the substance of the ideas which we have set forth (for the objections coming from the camp of the German Marxists, who have been advocating such ideas for many years already, have been long known to Kautsky as the objections of a definite trend in Marxism).

Kautsky's definition is as follows:

> "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control or to annex increasingly big *agrarian*" (Kautsky's italics) "regions irrespective of what nations inhabit those regions."*

This definition is utterly worthless because it one-sidedly, *i.e.*, arbitrarily, brings out the national question alone (although this is extremely important in itself as well as in its relation to imperialism), it arbitrarily and *inaccurately* relates this question *only* to industrial capital in the countries which annex other nations, and in an equally arbitrary and inaccurate manner brings out the annexation of agrarian regions.

Imperialism is a striving for annexations—this is what the *political* part of Kautsky's definition amounts to. It is correct, but very incomplete, for politically, imperialism is, in general, a striving towards violence and reaction. For the moment, however, we are interested in the *economic* aspect of the question, which Kautsky *himself* introduced into his definition. The inaccuracy of Kautsky's definition is strikingly obvious. The characteristic feature of imperialism is *not* industrial capital, *but* finance capital. It is not an accident that in France it was precisely the extraordinarily rapid develop-

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* *Die Neue Zeit,* 32nd year (1913-14), II, Sept. 11, 1914, p. 909; *cf.* also 34th year (1915-16), II, p. 107 *et seq.*

ment of *finance* capital, and the weakening of industrial capital, that, from 1830 onwards, gave rise to the extreme extension of annexationist (colonial) policy. The characteristic feature of imperialism is precisely that it strives to annex *not only* agricultural regions, but even highly industrialized regions (German appetite for Belgium; French appetite for Lorraine), because 1) the fact that the world is already divided up obliges those contemplating a *new* division to reach out for *any kind* of territory, and 2) because an essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between a number of great powers in the striving for hegemony, *i.e.*, for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine *his* hegemony. (Belgium is chiefly necessary to Germany as a base for operations against England; England needs Bagdad as a base for operations against Germany, etc.)

Kautsky refers especially—and repeatedly—to English writers who, he alleges, have given a purely political meaning to the word "imperialism" in the sense that Kautsky understands it. We take up the work by the Englishman Hobson, *Imperialism*, which appeared in 1902, and therein we read:

> "The new imperialism differs from the older, first, in substituting for the ambition of a single growing empire the theory and the practice of competing empires, each motivated by similar lusts of political aggrandisement and commercial gain; secondly, in the dominance of financial or investing over mercantile interests."*

We see, therefore, that Kautsky is absolutely wrong in referring to English writers generally (unless he meant the vulgar English imperialist writers, or the avowed apologists for imperialism). We see that Kautsky, while claiming that he continues to defend Marxism, as a matter of fact takes a step backward compared with the *social-liberal* Hobson, who *more correctly* takes into account two "historically concrete" (Kautsky's definition is a mockery of historical concreteness) features of modern imperialism: 1) the competition between *several* imperialisms, and 2) the predominance of the financier over the merchant. If it were chiefly a question of the annexation of agrarian countries by industrial countries, the role of the merchant would be predominant.

Kautsky's definition is not only wrong and un-Marxian. It serves as a basis for a whole system of views which run counter to Marxian theory and Marxian practice all along the line. We shall refer to this again later. The argument about words which Kautsky raises as to whether the modern stage of capitalism should be called "imperialism" or "the stage of finance capital" is of no importance. Call it what you will, it matters little. The fact of the matter is that Kautsky detaches the politics of imperialism from

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* J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism—a Study*, London, 1902, p. 324.

its economics, speaks of annexations as being a policy "preferred" by finance capital, and opposes to it another bourgeois policy which, he alleges, is possible on this very basis of finance capital. According to his argument, monopolies in economics are compatible with non-monopolistic, non-violent, non-annexationist methods in politics. According to his argument, the territorial division of the world, which was completed precisely during the period of finance capital, and which constitutes the basis of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the biggest capitalist states, is compatible with a non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism.

Kautsky enters into controversy with the German apologist of imperialism and annexations, Cunow, who clumsily and cynically argues that imperialism is modern capitalism; the development of capitalism is inevitable and progressive; therefore imperialism is progressive; therefore, we should cringe before and eulogize it. This is something like the caricature of Russian Marxism which the Narodniks drew in 1894-95. They used to argue as follows: if the Marxists believe that capitalism is inevitable in Russia, that it is progressive, then they ought to open a public house and begin to implant capitalism! Kautsky's reply to Cunow is as follows: imperialism is not modern capitalism. It is only one of the forms of the policy of modern capitalism. This policy we can and should fight; we can and should fight against imperialism, annexations, etc.

The reply seems quite plausible, but in effect it is a more subtle and more disguised (and therefore more dangerous) propaganda of conciliation with imperialism; for unless it strikes at the economic basis of the trusts and banks, the "struggle" against the policy of the trusts and banks reduces itself to bourgeois reformism and pacifism, to an innocent and benevolent expression of pious hopes. Kautsky's theory means refraining from mentioning existing contradictions, forgetting the most important of them, instead of revealing them in their full depth; it is a theory that has nothing in common with Marxism. Naturally, such a "theory" can only serve the purpose of advocating unity with the Cunows.

Kautsky writes:

> "from the purely economic point of view it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultra-imperialism,"*

* *Die Neue Zeit*, 32nd year (1913-14), II, Sept 11, 1914, p. 909; *cf.* also 34th year (1915-16), II, p. 107 *et seq.*

i.e., of a super-imperialism, a union of world imperialism and not struggles among imperialisms; a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of

> "the joint exploitation of the world by internationally combined finance capital."*

We shall have to deal with this "theory of ultra-imperialism" later on in order to show in detail how definitely and utterly it departs from Marxism. In keeping with the plan of the present work, we shall examine the exact economic data on this question. Is "ultra-imperialism" possible "from the purely economic point of view" or is it ultra-nonsense?

If, by purely economic point of view a "pure" abstraction is meant, then all that can be said reduces itself to the following proposition: evolution is proceeding towards monopoly; therefore the trend is towards a single world monopoly, to a universal trust. This is indisputable, but it is also as completely meaningless as is the statement that "evolution is proceeding" towards the manufacture of foodstuffs in laboratories. In this sense the "theory" of ultra-imperialism is no less absurd than a "theory of ultra-agriculture" would be.

If, on the other hand, we are discussing the "purely economic" conditions of the epoch of finance capital as a historically concrete epoch, which opened at the beginning of the twentieth century, then the best reply that one can make to the lifeless abstractions of "ultra-imperialism" (which serve an exclusively reactionary aim: that of diverting attention from the depth of *existing* antagonisms) is to contrast them with the concrete economic realities of present-day world economy. Kautsky's utterly meaningless talk about ultra-imperialism encourages, among other things, that profoundly mistaken idea which only brings grist to the mill of the apologists of imperialism, *viz.*, that the rule of finance capital *lessens* the unevenness and contradictions inherent in world economy, whereas in reality it *increases* them.

R. Calwer, in his little book, *An Introduction to World Economics*,** attempted to compile the main, purely economic, data required to understand in a concrete way the internal relations of world economy at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. He divides the world into five "main economic areas," as follows: 1) Central Europe (the whole of Europe with the exception of Russia and Great Britain); 2) Great Britain; 3) Russia; 4) Eastern Asia; 5) America; he includes the colonies in the "areas" of the state to which they belong and "leaves out" a few

* *Die Neue Zeit*, 33rd year, I, April 30, 1915, p. 144.
** R. Calwer, *Einführung in die Weltwirtschaft*, Berlin, 1906.

countries not distributed according to areas, such as Persia, Afghanistan and Arabia in Asia; Morocco and Abyssinia in Africa, etc.

Here is a brief summary of the economic data he quotes on these regions:

Principal economic areas	Area	Pop.	Transport		Trade	Industry		
	Million sq. km.	Millions	Railways (thous. km.)	Mercantile fleet (million tons)	Imports & exports (billion marks)	Output of coal (million tons)	Output of pig iron (million tons)	No. of cotton spindles (millions)
1) Central European.	27.6 (23.6)*	388 (146)	204	8	41	251	15	26
2) British	28.9 (28.6)*	398 (355)	140	11	25	249	9	51
3) Russian	22	131	63	1	3	16	3	7
4) East Asian . . .	12	389	8	1	2	8	0.02	2
5) American . . .	30	148	379	6	14	245	14	19

We notice three areas of highly developed capitalism with a high development of means of transport, of trade and of industry: the Central European, the British and the American areas. Among these are three states which dominate the world: Germany, Great Britain, the United States. Imperialist rivalry and the struggle between these countries have become very keen because Germany has only a restricted area and few colonies (the creation of "Central Europe" is still a matter for the future; it is being born in the midst of desperate struggles). For the moment the distinctive feature of Europe is *political disintegration. In the British and American areas, on* the other hand, political concentration is very highly developed, but there is a tremendous disparity between the immense colonies of the one and the insignificant colonies of the other. In the colonies, capitalism is only beginning to develop. The struggle for South America is becoming more and more acute.

There are two areas where capitalism is not strongly developed: Russia and Eastern Asia. In the former, the density of population is very low, in the latter it is very high; in the former political concentration is very high, in the latter it does not exist. The partition of China is only beginning, and the struggle between Japan, U.S.A., etc., in connection therewith is continually gaining in intensity.

Compare this reality, the vast diversity of economic and political conditions, the extreme disparity in the rate of development of the various

* The figures in parentheses show the area and population of the colonies.

countries, etc., and the violent struggles of the imperialist states, with Kautsky's silly little fable about "peaceful" ultra-imperialism. Is this not the reactionary attempt of a frightened philistine to hide from stern reality? Are not the international cartels which Kautsky imagines are the embryos of "ultra-imperialism" (with as much reason as one would have for describing the manufacture of tabloids in a laboratory as ultra-agriculture in embryo) an example of the division *and the redivision* of the world, the transition from peaceful division to non-peaceful division and *vice versa?* Is not American and other finance capital, which divided the whole world peacefully, with Germany's participation, for example, in the international rail syndicate, or in the international mercantile shipping trust, now engaged in *redividing* the world on the basis of a new relation of forces, which is being changed by methods *by no means* peaceful?

Finance capital and the trusts are increasing instead of diminishing the differences in the rate of development of the various parts of the world economy. When the relation of forces is changed, how else, *under capitalism*, can the solution of contradictions be found, except by resorting to *violence?* Railway statistics* provide remarkably exact data on the different rates of development of capitalism and finance capital in world economy. In the last decades of imperialist development, the total length of railways, has changed as follows:

RAILWAYS
(thousand kilometres)

	1890		1913		Increase	
Europe	224		346		122	
U. S. A.	268		411		143	
Colonies (total)	82	125	210	347	128	222
Independent and semi-dependent states of Asia and America	43		137		94	
Total	617		1,104		—	

Thus, the development of railways has been more rapid in the colonies and in the independent (and semi-dependent) states of Asia and America.

* *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich (Statistical Yearbook for the German Empire)*: 1915, Appendix pp. 46-47, *Archiv für Eisenbahnwesen*, 1892 *(Railroad Archive)*. Minor detailed figures for the distribution of railways among the colonies of the various countries in 1890 had to be estimated approximately.

Here, as we know, the finance capital of the four or five biggest capitalist states reigns undisputed. Two hundred thousand kilometres of new railways in the colonies and in the other countries of Asia and America represent more than 40,000,000,000 marks in capital, newly invested on particularly advantageous terms, with special guarantees of a good return and with profitable orders for steel works, etc., etc.

Capitalism is growing with the greatest rapidity in the colonies and in overseas countries. Among the latter, *new* imperialist powers are emerging (*e.g.*, Japan). The struggle of world imperialism is becoming more acute. The tribute levied by finance capital on the most profitable colonial and overseas enterprises is increasing. In sharing out this "booty," an exceptionally large part goes to countries which, as far as the development of productive forces is concerned, do not always stand at the top of the list. In the case of the biggest countries, considered with their colonies, the total length *of railways was as follows (in thousands of kilometres):*

	1890	1913	Increase
U. S. A.	268	413	145
British Empire	107	208	101
Russia	32	78	46
Germany	43	68	25
France	41	63	22
Total for 5 Great Powers . . .	491	830	339

Thus, about 80 per cent of the total existing railways are concentrated in the hands of the five Great Powers. But the concentration of the *ownership* of these railways, of finance capital, is much greater still: French and English millionaires, for example, own an enormous amount of stocks and bonds in American, Russian and other railways.

Thanks to her colonies, Great Britain has increased the length of "her" railways by 100,000 kilometres, four times as much as Germany. And yet, it is well known that the development of productive forces in Germany, and especially the development of the coal and iron industries, has been much more rapid during this period than in England—not to mention France and Russia. In 1892, Germany produced 4,900,000 tons of pig iron and Great Britain produced 6,800,000 tons; in 1912, Germany produced 17,600,000 tons and Great Britain, 9,000,000 tons. Germany, therefore, had an overwhelming superiority over England in this respect.* We ask, is

* *Cf.* also Edgar Crummond, "The Economic Relations of the British and German Empires" in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, July 1914, p. 777, *et seq.*

there *under capitalism* any means of removing the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and "spheres of influence" for finance capital on the other side—other than by resorting to war?

VIII. THE PARASITISM AND DECAY OF CAPITALISM

We have to examine yet another very important aspect of imperialism to which, usually, too little importance is attached in most of the arguments on this subject. One of the shortcomings of the Marxist Hilferding is that he takes a step backward compared with the non-Marxist Hobson. We refer to parasitism, which is a feature of imperialism.

As we have seen, the most deep-rooted economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, *i.e.*, monopoly which has grown out of capitalism and exists in the general environment of capitalism, commodity production and competition, and remains in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. Nevertheless, like all monopoly, this capitalist monopoly inevitably gives rise to a tendency to stagnation and decay. As monopoly prices become fixed, even temporarily, so the stimulus to technical and, consequently, to all progress, disappears to a certain extent, and to that extent, also, the economic possibility arises of deliberately retarding technical progress. For instance, in America, a certain Mr. Owens invented a machine which revolutionized the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle manufacturing cartel purchased Owens' patent, but pigeon-holed it, refrained from utilizing it. Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for a long period of time, eliminate competition in the world market (and this, by the by, is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is so absurd). Certainly, the possibility of reducing cost of production and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements operates in the direction of change. Nevertheless, the *tendency* to stagnation and decay, which is the feature of monopoly, continues, and in certain branches of industry, in certain countries, for certain periods of time, it becomes predominant.

The monopoly of ownership of very extensive, rich or well-situated colonies, operates in the same direction.

Further, imperialism is an immense accumulation of money capital in a few countries, which, as we have seen, amounts to 100-150 billion francs in various securities. Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather of a category, of *bondholders* (*rentiers*), *i.e.*, people who live by "clipping coupons," who take no part whatever in production, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the *rentiers* from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by the exploitation of the labour of several overseas countries and colonies.

"In 1893," writes Hobson, "the British capital invested abroad represented about 15 per cent of the total wealth of the United Kingdom."*

Let us remember that by 1915 this capital had increased about two and a half times.

"Aggressive imperialism," says Hobson further on, "which costs the taxpayer so dear, which is of so little value to the manufacturer and trader ... is a source of great gain to the investor.... The annual income Great Britain derives from commissions in her whole foreign and colonial trade, import and export, is estimated by Sir R. Giffen at £18,000,000 for 1899, taken at 2½ per cent, upon a turnover of £800,000,000."**

Great as this sum is, it does not explain the aggressive imperialism of Great Britain. This is explained by the 90 to 100 million pounds sterling income from "invested" capital, the income of the rentiers.

The income of the bondholders is *five times greater* than the income obtained from the foreign trade of the greatest "trading" country in the world. This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism.

For that reason the term, "rentier state" (*Rentnerstaat*), or usurer state, is passing into current use in the economic literature that deals with imperialism. The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states on the one side, and a vast majority of debtor states on the other.

"The premier place among foreign investments," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is held by those placed in politically dependent or closely allied countries. Great Britain grants loans to Egypt, Japan, China and South America. Her navy plays here the part of bailiff in case of necessity. Great Britain's political power protects her from the indignation of her debtors."***

Sartorius von Waltershausen in his book, *The National Economic System of Foreign Investments*, cites Holland as the model "rentier state" and points out that Great Britain and France have taken the same road.**** Schilder believes that five industrial nations have become "pronounced creditor nations": Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. Holland does not appear on this list simply because she is "industrially less developed."(*) The United States is creditor only of the American countries.

* Hobson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.—*Ed.*

** *Op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.—*Ed.*

*** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 320, *et seq.*

**** Sartorius von Waltershausen, *Das volkswirtschaftliche System, etc.* (*The National Economic System, etc.*), Book IV, Berl., 1907.

(*) Schilder, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

> "Great Britain," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is gradually becoming transformed from an industrial state into a creditor state. Notwithstanding the absolute increase in industrial output and the export of manufactured goods, the relative importance of income from interest and dividends, issues of securities, commissions and speculation is on the increase in the whole of the national economy. In my opinion it is precisely this that forms the economic basis of imperialist ascendancy. The creditor is more permanently attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer."*

In regard to Germany, A. Lansburgh, the editor of *Die Bank*, in 1911, in an article entitled "Germany—a Rentier State," wrote the following:

> "People in Germany are ready to sneer at the yearning to become rentiers that is observed among the people in France. But they forget that as far as the middle class is concerned the situation in Germany is becoming more and more like that in France."**

The rentier state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism, and this circumstance cannot fail to influence all the social-political conditions of the countries affected generally, and the two fundamental trends in the working-class movement, in particular. To demonstrate this in the clearest possible manner we will quote Hobson, who will be regarded as a more "reliable" witness, since he cannot be suspected of leanings towards "orthodox Marxism"; moreover, he is an Englishman who is very well acquainted with the situation in the country which is richest in colonies, in finance capital, and in imperialist experience.

With the Boer War fresh in his mind, Hobson describes the connection between imperialism and the interests of the "financiers," the growing profits from contracts, etc., and writes:

> "While the directors of this definitely parasitic policy are capitalists, the same motives appeal to special classes of the workers. In many towns, most important trades are dependent upon government employment or contracts; the imperialism of the metal and shipbuilding centres is attributable in no small degree to this fact."***

In this writer's opinion there are two causes which weakened the older empires: 1) "economic parasitism," and 2) the formation of armies composed of subject races.

> "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence."****

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* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *op. cit.*, p. 122—*Ed.*
** *Die Bank*, 1911, I, pp. 10-11.
*** Hobson, *op. cit.*, p. 103.—*Ed.*
**** Hobson, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

And we would add that the economic possibility of such corruption, whatever its form may be, requires high monopolist profits.

As for the second cause, Hobson writes:

> "One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire *has been done by natives*; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, *has been done for us by natives*."*

Hobson gives the following economic appraisal of the prospect of the partition of China:

> "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a large body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa."**
>
> "We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western States, a European federation of great powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilization, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great, tame masses of *retainers*, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a *new financial aristocracy*. Let *those who* would scout such a theory" (it would be better to say: prospect) "as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England *today which are already reduced to* this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of *similar groups of financiers, investors*, and *political* and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit

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* *Op. cit.*, p. 144.
** *Op. cit*, p. 335.

the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable: but the influences which govern the imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards some such consummation."*

Hobson is quite right. *Unless* the forces of imperialism are counteracted they will lead precisely to what he has described. He correctly appraises the significance of a "United States of Europe" in the present conditions of imperialism. He should have added, however, that, *even within* the working-class movement, the opportunists, who are for the moment predominant in most countries, are "working" systematically and undeviatingly in this very direction. Imperialism, which means the partition of the world, and the exploitation of other countries besides China, which means high monopoly profits for a handful of very rich countries, creates the economic possibility of corrupting the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters, gives form to, and strengthens opportunism. However, we must not lose sight of the forces which counteract imperialism in general, and opportunism in particular, which, naturally, the social-liberal Hobson is unable to perceive.

The German opportunist, Gerhard Hildebrand, who was expelled from the Party for defending imperialism, and who would today make a leader of the so-called "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany, serves as a good supplement to Hobson by his advocacy of a "United States of Western Europe" (without Russia) for the purpose of "joint" action ... against the African Negroes, against the "great Islamic movement," for the upkeep of a "powerful army and navy," against a "Sino-Japanese coalition,"** etc.

The description of "British imperialism" in Schulze-Gaevernitz's book reveals the same parasitical traits. The national income of Great Britain approximately doubled from 1865 to 1898, while the income "from abroad" increased *ninefold* in the same period. While the "merit" of imperialism is that it "trains the Negro to habits of industry" (not without coercion of course ...), the "danger" of imperialism is that:

"Europe ... will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then the more arduous toil in industry—on to the coloured races, and itself be content with the role of rentier, and in this way, perhaps, pave the way for the economic, and later, the political emancipation of the coloured races."

An increasing proportion of land in Great Britain is being taken out of cultivation and used for sport, for the diversion of the rich.

* Hobson, *op. cit.*, pp. 385-86.

** Gerhard Hildebrand, *Die Erschütterung der Industrieherrschaft und des Industriesozialismus*, Jena, 1910, p. 229, *et seq.*

"Scotland," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is the most aristocratic playground in the world—it lives ... on its past and on Mr. Carnegie."

On horse-racing and fox-hunting alone Britain annually spends £14,000,000. The number of rentiers in England is about one million. The percentage of the productively employed population to the total population is becoming smaller.

Year	Population	No. of workers in basic industries	Per cent of total population
	(millions)		
1851	17.9	4.1	23
1901	32.5	4.9	15

And in speaking of the British working class the bourgeois student of "British imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century" is obliged to distinguish systematically between the "*upper stratum*" of the workers and the "*lower stratum of the proletariat proper*." The upper stratum furnishes the main body of members of co-operatives, of trade unions, of sporting clubs and of numerous religious sects. The electoral system, which in Great Britain is still "*sufficiently restricted to exclude the lower stratum of the proletariat proper*," is adapted to their level! In order to present the condition of the British working class in the best possible light, only this upper stratum—which constitutes only a *minority* of the proletariat—is generally spoken of. For instance, "the problem of unemployment is mainly a London problem and that of the lower proletarian stratum, *which is of little political moment* for politicians."* It would be better to say: which is of little political moment for the bourgeois politicians and the "Socialist" opportunists.

Another special feature of imperialism, which is connected with the facts we are describing, is the decline in emigration from imperialist countries, and the increase in immigration into these countries from the backward countries where lower wages are paid. As Hobson observes, emigration from Great Britain has been declining since 1884. In that year the number of emigrants was 242,000, while in 1900, the number was only 169,000. German emigration reached the highest point between 1881 and 1890, with a total of 1,453,000 emigrants. In the course of the following two decades, it fell to 544,000 and even to 341,000. On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of workers entering Germany from Austria, Italy, Russia and other countries. According to the 1907 census, there were

* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, pp. 246, 301, 317, 323, 324, 361.

1,342,294 foreigners in Germany, of whom 440,800 were industrial workers and 257,329 were agricultural workers.* In France, the workers employed in the mining industry are, "in great part," foreigners: Polish, Italian and Spanish.** In the United States, immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are engaged in the most poorly paid occupations, while American workers provide the highest percentage of overseers or of the better paid workers.*** Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections even among the workers, and to detach them from the main proletarian masses.

It must be observed that in Great Britain the tendency of imperialism to divide the workers, to encourage opportunism among them and to cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, revealed itself much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries; for two important distinguishing features of imperialism were observed in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century, *viz.*, vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in the world market. Marx and Engels systematically traced this relation between opportunism in the labour movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism for several decades. For example, on October 7, 1858, Engels wrote to Marx:

> "The English proletariat is becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy, and a bourgeois proletariat *as well as* a bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is, of course, to a certain extent justifiable."

Almost a quarter of a century later, in a letter dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks of "...the worst type of English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least, paid by the bourgeoisie."**** In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote:

> "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy? Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers merrily share the feast of England's monopoly of the colonies and the world market...." (*) (Engels expressed similar ideas in the press in his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, which appeared in 1892.)

* *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches (Statistics of the German Empire)*, Vol. 211.

** Henger, *Die Kapitalsanlage der Franzosen (French Investments)*, Stuttgart, 1913, p. 75.

*** Hourwich, *Immigration and Labor*, New York, 1913.

**** Marx-Engels, *Briefwechsel, Gesamtausgabe*, Section 3, Vol. II, p. 340; Vol. IV, p. 511.—*Ed.*

(*) *Cf.* Karl Kautsky, *Sozialismus und Kolonialpolitik*, Berlin, 1907, p. 79; this pamphlet was written by Kautsky in those infinitely distant days when he was still a Marxist.

We thus see clearly the causes and effects. The causes are: 1) Exploitation of the whole world by this country. 2) Its monopolistic position in the world market. 3)Its colonial monopoly. The effects are: 1) A section of the British proletariat becomes bourgeois. 2) A section of the proletariat permits itself to be led by men sold to, or at least, paid by the bourgeoisie. The imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the division of the world among a handful of states, each of which today exploits (*i.e.*, draws super-profits from) a part of the world only a little smaller than that which England exploited in 1858. Each of them, by means of trusts, cartels, finance capital, and debtor and creditor relations, occupies a monopoly position in the world market. Each of them enjoys to some degree a colonial monopoly. (We have seen that out of the total of 75,000,000 sq. km. which comprise the *whole* colonial world, *65,000,000* sq. km., or 86 per cent, belong to six great powers; *61,000,000* sq. km., or 81 per cent belong to three powers.)

The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of economic and political conditions which could not but increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and vital interests of the working-class movement. Embryonic imperialism has grown into a dominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed. On the other hand, instead of an undisputed monopoly by Great Britain, we see a few imperialist powers contending for the right to share in this monopoly, and this struggle is characteristic of the whole period of the beginning of the twentieth century. Opportunism, therefore, cannot now triumph in the working-class movement of any country for decades as it did in England in the second half of the nineteenth century. But, in a number of countries it has grown ripe, overripe, and rotten, and has become completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of "social chauvinism."*

IX. THE CRITIQUE OF IMPERIALISM

By the critique of imperialism, in the broad sense of the term, we mean the attitude towards imperialist policy of the different classes of society as part of their general ideology.

The enormous dimensions of finance capital concentrated in a few hands and creating an extremely extensive and close network of ties and relationships which subordinate not only the small and medium, but also even the very small capitalists and small masters, on the one hand, and the intense struggle waged against other national state groups of financiers for the

* Russian social chauvinism represented by Messrs. Potresov, Chkhenkeli, Maslov etc, in its avowed form as well as in its tacit form, as represented by Messrs. Chkheidze, Skobelev, Axelrod, Martov, etc., also emerged from the Russian variety of opportunism, namely, Liquidatorism.

division of the world and domination over other countries, on the other hand, cause the wholesale transition of the possessing classes to the side of imperialism. The signs of the times are a "general" enthusiasm regarding its prospects, a passionate defence of imperialism, and every possible embellishment of its real nature. The imperialist ideology also penetrates the working class. There is no Chinese Wall between it and the other classes. The leaders of the so-called "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany are today justly called "social-imperialists," that is, Socialists in words and imperialists in deeds; but as early as 1902, Hobson noted the existence of "Fabian imperialists" who belonged to the opportunist Fabian Society in England.

Bourgeois scholars and publicists usually come out in defence of imperialism in a somewhat veiled form, and obscure its complete domination and its profound roots; they strive to concentrate attention on partial and secondary details and do their very best to distract attention from the main issue by means of ridiculous schemes for "reform," such as police supervision of the trusts and banks, etc. Less frequently, cynical and frank imperialists speak out and are bold enough to admit the absurdity of the idea of reforming the fundamental features of imperialism.

We will give an example. The German imperialists attempt, in the magazine *Archives of World Economy*, to follow the movements for national emancipation in the colonies, particularly, of course, in colonies other than those belonging to Germany. They note the ferment and protest movements in India, the movement in Natal (South Africa), the movement in the Dutch East Indies, etc. One of them, commenting on an English report of the speeches delivered at a conference of subject peoples and races, held on June 28-30, 1910, at which representatives of various peoples subject to foreign domination in Asia, Africa and Europe were present, writes as follows in appraising the speeches delivered at this conference:

> "We are told that we must fight against imperialism; that the dominant states should recognize the right of subject peoples to home rule; that an international tribunal should supervise the fulfilment of treaties concluded between the great powers and weak peoples. One does not get any further than the expression of these pious wishes. We see no trace of understanding of the fact that imperialism is indissolubly bound up with capitalism in its present form and therefore (!!) also no trace of the realization that an open struggle against imperialism would be hopeless, unless, perhaps, the fight is confined to protests against certain of its especially abhorrent excesses."*

Since the reform of the basis of imperialism is a deception, a "pious wish," since the bourgeois representatives of the oppressed nations go no "further" forward, the bourgeois representatives of the oppressing nation go "further" *backward*, to servility, towards imperialism, concealed by the cloak of "science." "Logic," indeed!

* *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* (*Archives of World Economy*), Vol. II, pp. 194-95.

The question as to whether it is possible to reform the basis of imperialism, whether to go forward to the accentuation and deepening of the antagonisms which it engenders, or backwards, towards allaying these antagonisms, is a fundamental question in the critique of imperialism. As a consequence of the fact that the political features of imperialism are reaction all along the line, and increased national oppression, resulting from the oppression of the financial oligarchy and the elimination of free competition, a petty-bourgeois-democratic opposition has been rising against imperialism in almost all imperialist countries since the beginning of the twentieth century. And the desertion of Kautsky and of the broad international Kautskyan trend from Marxism is displayed in the very fact that Kautsky not only did not trouble to oppose, not only was unable to oppose this petty-bourgeois reformist opposition, which is really reactionary in its economic basis, but in practice actually became merged with it

international stock and share issue statistics, A. Neymarck, who, after calculating the hundreds of billions of francs representing "international" securities, exclaimed in 1912: "Is it possible to believe that peace may be disturbed ... that, in the face of these *enormous figures, anyone would risk* starting a war?"*

Such simplicity of mind on the part of the bourgeois economists is not surprising. Besides, *it is in their interest* to pretend to be so naive and to talk "seriously" about peace under imperialism. But what remains of Kautsky's Marxism, when, in 1914-15-16, he takes up the same attitude as the bourgeois reformists and affirms that "everybody is agreed" (imperialists, pseudo-Socialists and social pacifists) as regards peace? Instead of an analysis of imperialism and an exposure of the depths of its contradictions, we have nothing but a reformist "pious wish," to wave it aside, to evade it.

Here is an example of Kautsky's economic criticism of imperialism. He takes the statistics of the British export and import trade with Egypt for 1872 and 1912. These statistics show that this export and import trade had developed more slowly than British foreign trade as a whole. From this Kautsky concludes that:

> "We have no reason to suppose that British trade with Egypt would have been less developed simply as a result of the mere operation of economic factors, without military occupation.... The urge of the present-day states to expand ... can be best promoted, not by the violent methods of imperialism, but by peaceful democracy."**

This argument, which is repeated in every key by Kautsky's ... Russian armour-bearer (and Russian protector of the social-chauvinists), Mr. Spectator, represents the basis of Kautskyan criticism of imperialism and that is why we must deal with it in greater detail. We will begin with a quotation from Hilferding, whose conclusions, as Kautsky on many occasions, and notably in April 1915, declared, have been "unanimously adopted by all Socialist theoreticians."

> "It is not the business of the proletariat," writes Hilferding, "to contrast the more progressive capitalist policy with that of the now by-gone era of free trade and of hostility towards the state. The reply of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital, to imperialism, cannot be free trade, but Socialism. The aim of proletarian policy cannot now be the ideal of restoring free competition—which has now become a reactionary ideal—but the complete abolition of competition by the vanquishment of capitalism."***

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* *Bulletin de l'Institut International de Statistique*, Vol. XIX, Book II, p. 225.

** Karl Kautsky, *Nationalstaat, imperialistischer Staat und Staatenbund* (*National State, Imperialist State and Union of States*), Nüremberg, 1915, pp. 72, 79.

*** Hilferding, *op. cit.*, p. 504.

The question as to whether it is possible to reform the basis of imperialism, whether to go forward to the accentuation and deepening of the antagonisms which it engenders, or backwards, towards allaying these antagonisms, is a fundamental question in the critique of imperialism. As a consequence of the fact that the political features of imperialism are reaction all along the line, and increased national oppression, resulting from the oppression of the financial oligarchy and the elimination of free competition, a petty-bourgeois-democratic opposition has been rising against imperialism in almost all imperialist countries since the beginning of the twentieth century. And the desertion of Kautsky and of the broad international Kautskyan trend from Marxism is displayed in the very fact that Kautsky not only did not trouble to oppose, not only was unable to oppose this petty-bourgeois reformist opposition, which is really reactionary in its economic basis, but in practice actually became merged with it.

In the United States, the imperialist war waged against Spain in 1898 stirred up the opposition of the "anti-imperialists," the last of the Mohicans of bourgeois democracy. They declared this war to be "criminal"; they denounced the annexation of foreign territories as being a violation of the Constitution, and denounced the "Jingo treachery" by means of which Aguinaldo, leader of the native Filipinos, was deceived (the Americans promised him the independence of his country, but later they landed troops and annexed it). They quoted the words of Lincoln:

> "When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs others, it is no longer self-government; it is despotism."*

But while all this criticism shrank from recognizing the indissoluble bond between imperialism and the trusts, and, therefore, between imperialism and the very foundations of capitalism; while it shrank from joining up with the forces engendered by large-scale capitalism and its development—it remained a "pious wish."

This is also, in the main, the attitude of Hobson in his criticism of imperialism. Hobson anticipated Kautsky in protesting against the "inevitability of imperialism" argument, and in urging the need to raise the consuming capacity of the "people" (under capitalism!). The petty-bourgeois point of view in the critique of imperialism, the domination of the banks, the financial oligarchy, etc., is that adopted by the authors we have often quoted, such as Agahd, A. Lansburgh, L. Eschwege, and among the French writers, Victor Bérard, author of a superficial book entitled *England and Imperialism* which appeared in 1900. All these authors, who make no claim to be Marxists, contrast imperialism with free competition and democracy; they condemn the Bagdad railway scheme as leading to disputes and war, utter "pious wishes" for peace, etc. This applies also to the compiler of

* Quoted by J. Patouillet, *L'impérialisme américain, Dijon*, 1904, p. 272.

international stock and share issue statistics. A. Neymarck, who, after calculating the hundreds of billions of francs representing "international" securities, exclaimed in 1912: "Is it possible to believe that peace may be disturbed... that, in the face of these enormous figures, anyone would risk starting a war?"*

Such simplicity of mind on the part of the bourgeois economists is not surprising. Besides, *it is in their interest* to pretend to be so naive and to talk "seriously" about peace under imperialism. But what remains of Kautsky's Marxism, when, in 1914-15-16, he takes up the same attitude as the bourgeois reformists and affirms that "everybody is agreed" (imperialists, pseudo-Socialists and social pacifists) as regards peace? Instead of an analysis of imperialism and an exposure of the depths of its contradictions, we have nothing but a reformist "pious wish," to wave it aside, to evade it.

Here is an example of Kautsky's economic criticism of imperialism. He takes the statistics of the British export and import trade with Egypt for 1872 and 1912. These statistics show that this export and import trade had developed more slowly than British foreign trade as a whole. From this Kautsky concludes that:

> "We have no reason to suppose that British trade with Egypt would have been less developed simply as a result of the mere operation of economic factors, without military occupation.... The urge of the present-day states to expand ... can be best promoted, not by the violent methods of imperialism, but by peaceful democracy."**

This argument, which is repeated in every key by Kautsky's ... Russian armour-bearer (and Russian protector of the social-chauvinists), Mr. Spectator, represents the basis of Kautskyan criticism of imperialism and that is why we must deal with it in greater detail. We will begin with a quotation from Hilferding, whose conclusions, as Kautsky on many occasions, and notably in April 1915, declared, have been "unanimously adopted by all Socialist theoreticians."

> "It is not the business of the proletariat," writes Hilferding, "to contrast the more progressive capitalist policy with that of the now by-gone era of free trade and of hostility towards the state. The reply of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital, to imperialism, cannot be free trade, but Socialism. The aim of proletarian policy cannot now be the ideal of restoring free competition—which has now become a reactionary ideal—but the complete abolition of competition by the vanquishment of capitalism."***

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* *Bulletin de l'Institut International de Statistique*, Vol. XIX, Book II, p. 225.

** Karl Kautsky, *Nationalstaat, imperialistischer Staat und Staatenbund* (*National State, Imperialist State and Union of States*), Nüremberg, 1915, pp. 72, 79.

*** Hilferding, *op. cit.*, p. 504.

Kautsky departed from Marxism by advocating what is, in the period of finance capital, a "reactionary ideal," "peaceful democracy" "the mere operation of economic factors," for *objectively* this ideal drags us back from monopoly capitalism to the non-monopolist stage, and is a reformist swindle.

Trade with Egypt (or with any other colony or semi-colony) "would have grown more" *without* military occupation, without imperialism, and without finance capital. What does this mean? That capitalism would develop more rapidly if free competition were not restricted by monopolies in general, by the "connections" or the yoke (*i.e.*, also the monopoly) of finance capital, or by the monopolist possession of colonies by certain countries?

Kautsky's argument can have no other meaning; and *this* "meaning" is meaningless. But suppose, for the sake of argument, free competition, without any sort of monopoly, *would* develop capitalism and trade more rapidly. Is it not a fact that the more rapidly trade and capitalism develop, the greater is the concentration of production and capital which *gives rise* to monopoly? And monopolies have *already* come into being—precisely *out* of free competition! Even if monopolies have now begun to retard progress, it is not an argument in favour of free competition, which has become impossible since it gave rise to monopoly.

Whichever way one turns Kautsky's argument, one will find nothing in it except reaction and bourgeois reformism.

Even if we modify this argument and say, as Spectator says, that the trade of the British colonies with the mother country is now developing more slowly than their trade with other countries, it does not save Kautsky; for it is *also* monopoly and imperialism that is beating Great Britain, only it is the monopoly and imperialism of another country (America, Germany). It is known that the cartels have given rise to a new and peculiar form of protective tariffs, *i.e.*, goods suitable for export are protected (Engels noted this in Vol. III of *Capital*). It is known, too, that the cartels and finance capital have a system peculiar to themselves, that of "exporting goods at cut-rate prices," or "dumping," as the English call it: within a given country the cartel sells its goods at a high price fixed by monopoly; abroad it sells them at a much lower price to undercut the competitor, to enlarge its own production to the utmost, etc. If Germany's trade with the British colonies is developing more rapidly than that of Great Britain with the same colonies, it only proves that German imperialism is younger, stronger and better organized than British imperialism, is superior to it. But this by no means proves the "superiority" of free trade, for it is not free trade fighting against protection and colonial dependence, but two rival imperialisms, two monopolies, two groups of finance capital that are fighting. The superiority of German imperialism over British imperialism is stronger than the wall of colonial frontiers or of protective tariffs. To use this as an "argument" *in favour* of free trade and "peaceful democracy" is banal,

is to forget the essential features and qualities of imperialism, to substitute petty-bourgeois reformism for Marxism.

It is interesting to note that even the bourgeois economist, A. Lansburgh, whose criticism of imperialism is as petty-bourgeois as Kautsky's, nevertheless got closer to a more scientific study of trade statistics. He did not compare merely one country, chosen at random, and a colony, with the other countries; he examined the export trade of an imperialist country: 1) with countries which are financially dependent upon it, which borrow money from it; and 2) with countries which are financially independent. He obtained the following results:

EXPORT TRADE OF GERMANY
(million marks)

	1889	1908	Per cent increase
To Countries Financially Dependent on Germany			
Rumania	48.2	70.8	47
Portugal	19.0	32.8	73
Argentina	60.7	147.0	143
Brazil	48.7	84.5	73
Chile	28.3	52.4	85
Turkey	29.9	64.0	114
Total	*234.8*	*451.5*	*92*
To Countries Financially Independent of Germany			
Great Britain	651.8	997.4	53
France	210.2	437.9	108
Belgium	137.2	322.8	135
Switzerland	177.4	401.1	127
Australia	21.2	64.5	205
Dutch East Indies	8.8	40.7	363
Total	*1,206.6*	*2,264.4*	*87*

Lansburgh did not draw *conclusions* and therefore, strangely enough, failed to observe that *if* the figures prove anything at all, they prove that *he is wrong*, for the exports to countries financially dependent on Germany have grown *more rapidly*, if only slightly, than those to the countries which are financially independent. (We emphasize the "if," for Lansburgh's figures are far from complete.)

Tracing the connection between export trade and loans, Lansburgh writes:

"In 1890-91, a Rumanian loan was floated through the German banks, which had already in previous years made advances on this loan. The loan was used chiefly for purchases of railway materials in

have, is that of a most reactionary method of consoling the masses with hopes of permanent peace being possible under capitalism, distracting their attention from the sharp antagonisms and acute problems of the present era, and directing it towards illusory prospects of an imaginary "ultra-imperialism" of the future. Deception of the masses—there, is nothing but this in Kautsky's "Marxian" theory.

Indeed, it is enough to compare well-known and indisputable facts to become convinced of the utter falsity of the prospects which Kautsky tries to conjure up before the German workers (and the workers of all lands). Let us consider India, Indo-China and China. It is known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, inhabited by six to seven hundred million human beings, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist states: Great Britain, France, Japan, the U.S.A., etc. We will assume that these imperialist countries form alliances against one another in order to protect and extend their possessions, their interests and their "spheres of influence" in these Asiatic states; these alliances will be "inter-imperialist," or "ultra-imperialist" alliances. We will assume that *all* the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the "peaceful" division of these parts of Asia; this alliance would be an alliance of "internationally united finance capital." As a matter of fact, alliances of this kind have been made in the twentieth century, notably with regard to China. We ask, is it "conceivable," assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in all and every possible form?

This question need only be stated clearly enough to make it impossible for any reply to be given other than in the negative; for there can be *no* other conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, of interests, of colonies, etc., than a calculation of the *strength* of the participants in the division, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. And the strength of these participants in the divison does not change to an equal degree, for under capitalism the development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries cannot be *even*. Half a century ago, Germany was a miserable, insignificant country, as far as its capitalist strength was concerned, compared with the strength of England at that time. Japan was similarly insignificant compared with Russia. Is it "conceivable" that in ten or twenty years' time the relative strength of the imperialist powers will have remained *un*changed? Absolutely inconceivable.

Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German "Marxist," Kautsky, "inter-imperialist" or "ultra-imperialist" alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are *in*evitably nothing more than a "truce" in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances

prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one is the condition for the other, giving rise to alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle out of *one and the same* basis of imperialist connections and the relations between world economics and world politics. But in order to pacify the workers and to reconcile them with the social-chauvinists who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie, wise Kautsky *separates* one link of a single chain from the other, separates the present peaceful (and ultra-imperialist, nay, ultra-ultra-imperialist) alliance of *all* the powers for the "pacification" of China (remember the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion) from the non-peaceful conflict of to-morrow, which will prepare the ground for another "peaceful" general alliance for the partition, say, of Turkey, on the day after to-morrow, *etc., etc.* Instead of showing the vital connection between periods of imperialist peace and periods of imperialist war, Kautsky puts before the workers a lifeless abstraction solely in order to reconcile them to their lifeless leaders.

An American writer, Hill, in his *A History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe* points out in his preface the following periods of contemporary diplomatic history: 1) The era of revolution; 2) The constitutional movement; 3) The present era of "commercial imperialism."* Another writer divides the history of Great Britain's foreign policy since 1870 into four periods: 1) The first Asiatic period (that of the struggle against Russia's advance in Central Asia towards India); 2) The African period (approximately 1885-1902): that of struggles against France for the partition of Africa (the Fashoda incident of 1898 which brought France within a hair's breadth of war with Great Britain); 3) The second Asiatic period (alliance with Japan against Russia), and 4) The European period, chiefly anti-German.** "The political skirmishes of outposts take place on the financial field," wrote Riesser, the banker, in 1905, in showing how French finance capital operating in Italy was preparing the way for a political alliance of these countries, and how a conflict was developing between Great Britain and Germany over Persia, between all the European capitalists over Chinese loans, etc. Behold, the living reality of peaceful "ultra-imperialist" alliances in their indissoluble connection with ordinary imperialist conflicts!

Kautsky's toning down of the deepest contradictions of imperialism, which inevitably becomes the embellishment of imperialism, leaves its traces in this writer's criticism of the political features of imperialism. Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. The result of these tendencies is reaction all along the line, whatever the political system, and an extreme intensification of existing antagonisms in this domain also. Particularly acute

* David Jayne Hill, *A History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe*, Vol. I, p. x.

** Schilder, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 178.

becomes the yoke of national oppression and striving for annexations, *i.e.*, the violation of national independence (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of nations to self-determination). Hilferding justly draws attention to the connection between imperialism and the growth of national oppression.

> "In the newly opened up countries themselves," he writes, "the capitalism imported into them intensifies contradictions and excites the constantly growing resistance against the intruders of the peoples who are awakening to national consciousness. This resistance can easily become transformed into dangerous measures directed against foreign capital. The old social relations become completely revolutionized. The age-long agrarian incrustation of 'nations without history' is blasted away, and they are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself gradually procures for the vanquished the means and resources for their emancipation and they set out to achieve the same goal which once seemed highest to the European nations: the creation of a united national state as a means to economic and cultural freedom. This movement for national independence threatens European capital just in its most valuable and most promising fields of exploitation, and European capital can maintain its domination only by continually increasing its means of exerting violence."*

To this must be added that it is not only in newly opened up countries, but also in the old, that imperialism is leading to annexation, to increased national oppression, and consequently, also to increasing resistance. While opposing the intensification of political reaction caused by imperialism, Kautsky obscures the question, which has become very serious, of the impossibility of unity with the opportunists in the epoch of imperialism. While objecting to annexations, he presents his objections in a form that will be most acceptable and least offensive to the opportunists. He addresses himself to a German audience, yet he obscures the most topical and important point, for instance, the annexation by Germany of Alsace-Lorraine. In order to appraise this "lapse of mind" of Kautsky's we will take the following example. Let us suppose that a Japanese is condemning the annexation of the Philippine Islands by the Americans. Will many believe that he is doing so because he has a horror of annexations as such, and not because he himself has a desire to annex the Philippines? And shall we not be constrained to admit that the "fight" the Japanese is waging against annexations can be regarded as being sincere and politically honest only if he fights against the annexation of Korea by Japan, and urges freedom for Korea to secede from Japan?

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* Hilferding, *op. cit.*, pp. 433-34.

Kautsky's theoretical analysis of imperialism, as well as his economic and political criticism of imperialism, are permeated *through and through* with a spirit, absolutely irreconcilable with Marxism, of obscuring and glossing over the most profound contradictions of imperialism and with a striving to preserve the crumbling unity with opportunism in the European labour movement at all costs.

X. THE PLACE OF IMPERIALISM IN HISTORY

We have seen that the economic quintessence of imperialism is monopoly capitalism. This very fact determines its place in history, for monopoly that grew up on the basis of free competition, and precisely out of free competition, is the transition from the capitalist system to a higher social-economic order. We must take special note of the four principal forms of monopoly, or the four principal manifestations of monopoly capitalism, which are characteristic of the epoch under review.

Firstly, monopoly arose out of the concentration of production at a very advanced stage of development. This refers to the monopolist capitalist combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts. We have seen the important part that these play in modern economic life. At the beginning of the twentieth century, monopolies acquired complete supremacy in the advanced countries. And although the first steps towards the formation of the cartels were first taken by countries enjoying the protection of high tariffs (Germany, America), Great Britain, with her system of free trade, was not far behind in revealing the same basic phenomenon, namely, the birth of monopoly out of the concentration of production.

Secondly, monopolies have accelerated the capture of the most important sources of raw materials, especially for the coal and iron industries, which are the basic and most highly cartelized industries in capitalist society. The monopoly of the most important sources of raw materials has enormously increased the power of big capital, and has sharpened the antagonism between cartelized and non-cartelized industry.

Thirdly, monopoly has sprung from the banks. The banks have developed from modest intermediary enterprises into the monopolists of finance capital. Some three or five of the biggest banks in each of the foremost capitalist countries have achieved the "personal union" of industrial and bank capital, and have concentrated in their hands the disposal of thousands upon thousands of millions which form the greater part of the capital and income of entire countries. A financial oligarchy, which throws a close net of relations of dependence over all the economic and political institutions of contemporary bourgeois society without exception—such is the most striking manifestation of this monopoly.

Fourthly, monopoly has grown out of colonial policy. To the numerous "old" motives of colonial policy, finance capital has added the struggle for

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the sources of raw materials, for the export of capital, for "spheres of influence," *i.e.*, for spheres for profitable deals, concessions, monopolist profits and so on; in fine, for economic territory in general. When the colonies of the European powers in Africa, for instance, comprised only one-tenth of that territory (as was the case in 1876), colonial policy was able to develop by methods other than those of monopoly—by the "free grabbing" of territories, so to speak. But when nine-tenths of Africa had been seized (approximately by 1900), when the whole world had been divided up, there was inevitably ushered in a period of colonial monopoly and, consequently, a period of particularly intense struggle for the division and the redivision of the world.

The extent to which monopolist capital has intensified all the contradictions of capitalism is generally known. It is sufficient to mention the high cost of living and the oppression of the cartels. This intensification of contradictions constitutes the most powerful driving force of the transitional period of history, which began from the time of the definite victory of world finance capital.

Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination instead of striving for liberty, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by an extremely small group of the richest or most powerful nations—all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as parasitic or decaying capitalism. More and more prominently there emerges, as one of the tendencies of imperialism, the creation of the "bondholding" (rentier) state, the usurer state, in which the bourgeoisie lives on the proceeds of capital exports and by "clipping coupons." It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency to decay precludes the possibility of the rapid growth of capitalism. It does not. In the epoch of imperialism, certain branches of industry, certain strata of the bourgeoisie and certain countries betray, to a more or less degree, one or other of these tendencies. On the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before. But this growth is not only becoming more and more uneven in general; its unevenness also manifests itself, in particular, in the decay of the countries which are richest in capital (such as England).

In regard to the rapidity of Germany's economic development, Risser, the author of the book on the big German banks states:

> "The progress of the preceding period (1848-70), which had not been exactly slow, stood in about the same ratio to the rapidity with which the whole of Germany's national economy, and with it German banking, progressed during this period (1870-1905) as the mail coach of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation stood to the speed of the present-day automobile . . . which in whizzing past, it must be said, often endangers not only innocent pedestrians in its path, but also the occupants of the car."*

* Riesser, *op. cit.*, third edition, p. 354.—*Ed.*

In its turn, this finance capital which has grown so rapidly is not unwilling (precisely because it has grown so quickly) to pass on to a more "tranquil" possession of colonies which have to be seized—and not only by peaceful methods—from richer nations. In the United States, economic development in the last decades has been even more rapid than in Germany, and *for this very reason*, the parasitic character of modern American capitalism has stood out with particular prominence. On the other hand, a comparison of, say, the republican American bourgeoisie with the monarchist Japanese or German bourgeoisie shows that the most pronounced political distinctions diminish to an extreme degree in the epoch of imperialism—not because they are unimportant in general, but because in all these cases we are discussing a bourgeoisie which has definite features of parasitism.

The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the numerous branches of industry, in one of numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to corrupt certain sections of the working class, and for a time a fairly considerable minority, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or nation against all the others. The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this striving. And so there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism, which revealed itself first and most clearly in England, owing to the fact that certain features of imperialist development were observable there much earlier than in other countries.

Some writers, L. Martov, for example, try to evade the fact that there is a connection between imperialism and opportunism in the labour movement—which is particularly striking at the present time—by resorting to "official optimistic" arguments (*à la* Kautsky and Huysmans) like the following: the cause of the opponents of capitalism would be hopeless if it were precisely progressive capitalism that led to the increase of opportunism, or, if it were precisely the best paid workers who were inclined towards opportunism, etc. We must have no illusion regarding "optimism" of this kind. It is optimism in regard to opportunism; it is optimism which serves to conceal opportunism. As a matter of fact the extraordinary rapidity and the particularly revolting character of the development of opportunism is by no means a guarantee that its victory will be durable: the rapid growth of a malignant abscess on a healthy body only causes it to burst more quickly and thus to relieve the body of it. The most dangerous people of all in this respect are those who do not wish to understand that the fight against imperialism is a sham and humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism.

From all that has been said in this book on the economic nature of imperialism, it follows that we must define it as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism. It is very instructive in this respect to note that the bourgeois economists, in describing modern capitalism, frequently employ terms like "interlocking," "absence of isola-

tion." etc.; "in conformity with their functions and course of development," banks are "not purely private business enterprises; they are more and more outgrowing the sphere of purely private business regulations." And this very Riesser, who uttered the words just quoted, declares with all seriousness that the "prophecy" of the Marxists concerning "socialization" has "not come true"!

What then does this word "interlocking" express? It merely expresses the most striking feature of the process going on before our eyes. It shows that the observer counts the separate trees, but cannot see the wood. It slavishly copies the superficial, the fortuitous, the chaotic. It reveals the observer as one who is overwhelmed by the mass of raw material and is utterly incapable of appreciating its meaning and importance. Ownership of shares and relations between owners of private property "interlock in a haphazard way." But the underlying factor of this interlocking, its very base, is the changing social relations of production. When a big enterprise assumes gigantic proportions, and, on the basis of exact computation of mass data, organizes according to plan the supply of primary raw materials to the extent of two-thirds, or three-fourths of all that is necessary for tens of millions of people; when the raw materials are transported to the most suitable place of production, sometimes hundreds or thousands of miles away, in a systematic and organized manner; when a single centre directs all the successive stages of work right up to the manufacture of numerous varieties of finished articles; when these products are distributed according to a single plan among tens and hundreds of millions of consumers (as in the case of the distribution of oil in America and Germany by the American "oil trust")—then it becomes evident that we have socialization of production, and not mere "interlocking"; that private economic relations and private property relations constitute a shell which is no longer suitable for its contents, a shell which must inevitably begin to decay if its destruction be delayed by artificial means ; a shell which may continue in a state of decay for a fairly long period (particularly if the cure of the opportunist abscess is protracted), but which will inevitably be removed.

The enthusiastic admirer of German imperialism, Schulze-Gaevernitz exclaims:

> "Once the supreme management of the German banks has been entrusted to the hands of a dozen persons, their activity is even today more significant for the public good than that of the majority of the Ministers of State." (The "interlocking" of bankers, ministers, magnates of industry and rentiers, is here conveniently forgotten.) ... "If we conceive of the tendencies of development which we have noted as realized to the utmost: the money capital of the nation united in the banks; the banks themselves combined into cartels; the investment capital of the nation cast in the shape of securities, then the brilliant forecast of Saint-Simon will be fulfilled: 'The present anarchy of pro-

duction caused by the fact that economic relations are developing without uniform regulation must make way for organization in production. Production will no longer be shaped by isolated manufacturers, independent of each other and ignorant of man's economic needs, but by a social institution. A central body of management, being able to survey the large fields of social economy from a more elevated point of view, will regulate it for the benefit of the whole of society, will be able to put the means of production into suitable hands, and above all will take care that there be constant harmony between production and consumption. Institutions already exist which have assumed as part of their task a certain organization of economic labour: the banks.' The fulfilment of the forecasts of Saint-Simon still lies in the future, but we are on the way to its fulfilment—Marxism, different from what Marx imagined, but different only in form."*

A crushing "refutation" of Marx, indeed! It is a retreat from Marx's precise, scientific analysis to Saint-Simon's guesswork, the guesswork of a genius, but guesswork all the same.

Published originally
as a separate pamphlet
in April, 1917,
Petrograd

* Schulze-Gaevernitz in *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik*, pp. 145-46.

THE WAR PROGRAM OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

In Holland, Scandinavia and Switzerland, voices are heard among the revolutionary Social-Democrats—who are combating the social-chauvinist lies about "defence of the fatherland" in the present imperialist war—in favour of substituting for the old point in the Social-Democratic minimum program: "militia, or the armed nation," a new one: "disarmament." The *Jugendinternationale* (*The Youth International*) has inaugurated a discussion on this question and has published in No. 3 an editorial article in favour of disarmament. In R. Grimm's latest theses, we regret to note, there is also a concession to the "disarmament" idea. Discussions have been started in the periodicals *Neues Leben* (*New Life*) and *Vorbote.*

Let us examine the position of the advocates of disarmament.

I

The main argument is that the demand for disarmament is the clearest, most decisive, most consistent expression of the struggle against all militarism and against all war.

But this main argument is precisely the principal error of the advocates of disarmament. Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be Socialists, be opposed to all war.

In the first place, Socialists have never been, nor can they be, opposed to revolutionary wars. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist "Great" Powers has become thoroughly reactionary, and we regard the war which *this* bourgeoisie is now waging as a reactionary, slaveowners' and criminal war. But what about a war *against* this bourgeoisie? For example, a war for liberation waged by people who are oppressed by and dependent upon this bourgeoisie, or by colonial peoples, for their independence? In the theses of the *Internationale* group, in § 5, we read: "In the era of this unbridled imperialism there can be no more national wars of any kind." This is obviously wrong.

The history of the Twentieth Century, this century of "unbridled imperialism," is replete with colonial wars. But what we Europeans, the imperialist oppressors of the majority of the peoples of the world, with our

habitual, despicable European chauvinism, call "colonial wars" are often national wars, or national rebellions of those oppressed peoples. One of the main features of imperialism is that it accelerates the development of capitalism in the most backward countries, and thereby extends and intensifies the struggle against national oppression. This is a fact. It inevitably follows from this that imperialism must often give rise to national wars. *Junius*,* who in her pamphlet defends the above-quoted "theses," says that in the imperialist epoch every national war against one of the imperialist Great Powers leads to the intervention of another competing imperialist Great Power and thus, every national war is converted into an imperialist war. But this argument is also wrong. This *may* happen, but it does not always happen. Many colonial wars in the period between 1900 and 1914 did not follow this road. And it would be simply ridiculous if we declared, for instance, that after the present war, if it ends in the extreme exhaustion of all the belligerents, "there can be no" national, progressive, revolutionary wars "whatever," waged, say, by China in alliance with India, Persia, Siam, etc., against the Great Powers.

To deny all possibility of national wars under imperialism is wrong in theory, obviously mistaken historically, and in practice is tantamount to European chauvinism: we who belong to nations that oppress hundreds of millions of people in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc., must tell the oppressed peoples that it is "impossible" for them to wage war against "our" nations!

Secondly, civil wars are also wars. Anyone who recognizes the class struggle cannot fail to recognize civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions, inevitable continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. All the great revolutions prove this. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, would mean sinking into extreme opportunism and renouncing the Socialist revolution.

Thirdly, the victory of Socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes such wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in the various countries. It cannot be otherwise under the commodity production system. From this it follows irrefutably that Socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously *in all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois for some time. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the Socialist country. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for Socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky, September 12, 1882, he openly admitted that it was possible for *already victorious* Socialism to wage "defensive wars." What he had in mind was

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* *Junius*—nom de plume of Rosa Luxemburg (see footnote on p. 552).—*Ed.*

defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished, and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not only of one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong and utterly unrevolutionary for us to evade or gloss over the most important thing, namely, that the most difficult task, the one demanding the greatest amount of fighting in the transition to Socialism, is to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie. "Social" parsons and opportunists are always ready to dream about the future peaceful Socialism; but the very thing that distinguishes them from revolutionary Social-Democrats is that they refuse to think about and reflect on the fierce class struggle and class *wars* that are necessary for the achievement of this beautiful future.

We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by words. The term "defence of the fatherland," for instance, is hateful to many, because the avowed opportunists and the Kautskyites use it to cover up and gloss over the lies of the bourgeoisie in the *present* predatory war. This is a fact. It does not follow from this, however, that we must forget to ponder over the meaning of political slogans. Recognizing "defence of the fatherland" in the present war is nothing more nor less than recognizing it as a "just" war, a war in the interests of the proletariat; nothing more nor less, because invasions may occur in any war. It would be simply foolish to repudiate "defence of the fatherland" *on the part of* the oppressed nations in their wars *against* the imperialist Great Powers, or on the part of a victorious proletariat in *its* war against some Galliffet* of a bourgeois state.

Theoretically, it would be quite wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of politics by other means: the present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist politics of two groups of Great Powers, and these politics were engendered and fostered by the sum total of the relationships of the imperialist epoch. But this very epoch must also necessarily engender and foster the politics of struggle against national oppression and the politics of the proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie, and therefore, also the possibility and the inevitability, first, of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions *against* the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary war, etc.

II

To this must be added the following general considerations.

An oppressed class which does not strive to learn to use arms, to acquire arms, deserves to be treated like slaves. We cannot forget, unless we become bourgeois pacifists or opportunists, that we are living in a class society,

* Galliffet (1830-1909)—French general who drowned in blood the Paris Commune of 1871. In 1889-1900 he was War Minister in the Cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau.—*Ed.*

that there is no way out of this society, and there can be none, except by means of the class struggle. In every class society, whether it is based on slavery, serfdom, or, as at present, on wage labour, the oppressing class is armed. The modern standing army, and even the modern militia—even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, Switzerland, for example—represent the bourgeoisie armed *against* the proletariat. This is such an elementary truth that it is hardly necessary to dwell upon it. It is sufficient to recall the use of troops against strikers in all capitalist countries.

The fact that the bourgeoisie is armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest, most fundamental, and most important facts in modern capitalist society. And in face of this fact, revolutionary Social-Democrats are urged to "demand" "disarmament." This is tantamount to the complete abandonment of the point of view of the class struggle, the renunciation of all thought of revolution. Our slogan must be: The arming of the proletariat for the purpose of vanquishing, expropriating and disarming the bourgeoisie. These are the only tactics a revolutionary class can adopt, tactics which follow logically from the whole *objective development* of capitalist militarism, and dictated by that development. Only *after* the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie will it be able, without betraying its world historical mission, to throw all armaments on the scrap-heap; the proletariat will undoubtedly do this, *but only when this condition has been fulfilled, certainly not before.*

If the present war rouses among the reactionary Christian Socialists, among the whimpering petty bourgeoisie, *only* horror and fright, only aversion to all use of arms, to bloodshed, death, etc., then we must say: Capitalist society has always been an *endless horror.* And if this most reactionary of all wars is now preparing a *horrible end* for that society, we have no reason to drop into despair. At a time when, as every one can see, the bourgeoisie itself is paving the way for the only legitimate and revolutionary war, namely, civil war against the imperialist bourgeoisie, the objective significance of the "demand" for disarmament, or more correctly, the dream of disarmament, is nothing but an expression of despair.

We should like to remind those who say that this is a theory divorced from life, of two world-historical facts: the role of trusts and the employment of women in industry, on the one hand; and the Paris Commune of 1871 and the December uprising of 1905 in Russia, on the other.

The business of the bourgeoisie is to promote trusts, to drive women and children into the factories, to torture them there, to corrupt them, to condemn them to extreme poverty. We do not "demand" such a development. We do not "support" it; we fight it. But *how* do we fight? We know that trusts and the employment of women in industry are progressive. We do not want to go back to the handicraft system, to premonopolistic capitalism, to domestic drudgery for women. Forward through the trusts, etc., and beyond them to Socialism!

This argument, is, *mutatis mutandis*, applicable also to the present militarization of the people. Today the imperialist bourgeoisie militarizes not only the adults, but also the youth. To-morrow, it may proceed to militarize the women. To this we must say: All the better! The quicker it does this the nearer shall we be to the armed uprising against capitalism. How can Social-Democrats allow themselves to be frightened by the militarization of the youth, etc., if they have not forgotten the example of the Paris Commune? This is not a "theory divorced from life." It is not a dream, but a fact. It would be very bad indeed if, notwithstanding all the economic and political facts, Social-Democrats began to doubt that the imperialist epoch and imperialist wars must inevitably bring about a repetition of such facts.

A certain bourgeois observer of the Paris Commune, writing to an English newspaper, said: "If the French nation consisted entirely of women, what a terrible nation it would be!" Women, and children of thirteen and upwards, fought in the Paris Commune side by side with the men. Nor can it be different in the forthcoming battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. The proletarian women will not look on passively while the well-armed bourgeois shoot down the poorly armed or unarmed workers. They will take to arms as they did in 1871, and from the cowed nations of today—or more correctly, from the present-day labour movement, which is disorganized more by the opportunists than by the governments—there will undoubtedly arise, sooner or later, but with absolute certainty, an international league of the "terrible nations" of the revolutionary proletariat.

Militarism is now permeating the whole of social life. Imperialism is a fierce struggle of the Great Powers for the division and redivision of the world—therefore, it must inevitably lead to further militarization in all countries, even in the neutral and small countries. What will the proletarian women do against it? Only curse all war and everything military, only demand disarmament? The women of an oppressed class that is really revolutionary will never consent to play such a shameful role. They will say to their sons:

"You will soon be a man. You will be given a gun. Take it and learn to use it. The proletarians need this knowledge not to shoot your brothers, the workers of other countries, as they are doing in the present war, and as you are being told to do by the traitors to Socialism, but to fight the bourgeoisie of your own country, to put an end to exploitation, poverty and war, not by means of good intentions, but by vanquishing the bourgeoisie and by disarming it."

If we are to refrain from conducting such propaganda, precisely such propaganda, in *connection* with the present war, then we had better stop using highfalutin phrases about international revolutionary Social-Democracy, about the Socialist revolution, and about war against war.

III

The advocates of disarmament oppose the point in the program about the "armed nations" for the reason, among others, that this demand, they allege, easily leads to concessions to opportunism. We have examined above the most important point, namely, the relation of disarmament to the class struggle and to the social revolution. We will now examine the relation between the demand for disarmament and opportunism. One of the most important reasons why this demand is unacceptable is precisely that it, and the illusions it creates, inevitably weaken and devitalize our struggle against opportunism.

Undoubtedly this struggle is the main question immediately confronting the International. A struggle against imperialism that is not closely linked up with the struggle against opportunism is an idle phrase, or a fraud. One of the main defects of Zimmerwald and Kienthal,* one of the main reasons why these embryos of the Third International may possibly end in a fiasco, is that the question of the struggle against opportunism was not even raised openly, much less decided in the sense of proclaiming the necessity of breaking with the opportunists. Opportunism has triumphed—temporarily—in the European labour movement. Two main shades of opportunism have arisen in all the big countries: first, the avowed, cynical, and therefore less dangerous social-imperialism of Messrs. Plekhanov, Scheidemann, Legien, Albert Thomas and Sembat, Vandervelde, Hyndman, Henderson, *et al*; second, the concealed, Kautskyite opportunism: Kautsky-Haase and the Social-Democratic Labour Group in Germany; Longuet, Pressemanne, Mayeras, *et al.*, in France; Ramsay MacDonald and the other leaders of the Independent Labour Party in England; Martov, Chkheidze and others in Russia; Trèves and the other so-called Left reformists in Italy.

Avowed opportunism is openly and directly opposed to revolution and to the incipient revolutionary movements and outbursts, and is in direct alliance with the governments, varied as the forms of this alliance may be: from participation in Cabinets to participation in the War Industries Committees (in Russia). The masked opportunists, the Kautskyites, are much more harmful and dangerous to the labour movement, because they hide their advocacy of an alliance with the governments under a cloak of plausible, pseudo-"Marxist" catchwords and pacifist slogans. The fight against both these forms of prevailing opportunism must be conducted in all fields of proletarian politics: parliament, trade unions, strikes, military affairs, etc. The main distinguishing feature of *both* these forms of prevailing opportun-

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* *Zimmerwald*—the first international conference of the Internationalists held in Zimmerwald in September 1915. Lenin organized a Left-wing group there, the Zimmerwald Left, which united the revolutionary elements of the international socialist movement.

Kienthal—the second international conference of the Internationalists was held in Kienthal in April 1916.—*Ed.*

ism is that the concrete question of the connection between the present war and revolution is hushed up, concealed, or treated with an eye to police prohibitions. And this is done, notwithstanding the fact that before the war the connection between precisely *this* impending war and the proletarian revolution was pointed to innumerable times, both unofficially, and officially in the Basle Manifesto. The main defect in the demand for disarmament is its evasion of all the concrete questions of revolution. Or do the advocates of disarmament stand for a perfectly new species of unarmed revolution?

To proceed. We are by no means opposed to the fight for reforms. We do not wish to ignore the sad possibility that humanity may—if the worst comes to the worst—go through a second imperialist war, if, in spite of the numerous outbursts of mass unrest and mass discontent, and in spite of our efforts, revolution does not come out of the present war. We are in favour of a program of reforms which is *also* directed against the opportunists. The opportunists would be only too glad if we left the struggle for reforms entirely to them, and, saving ourselves by flight from sad reality, sought shelter in the heights above the clouds in some sort of "disarmament." "Disarmament" means simply running away from unpleasant reality and not fighting against it.

In such a program we would say something like this: "The slogan and the recognition of defence of the fatherland in the imperialist war of 1914-16 is only a means of corrupting the labour movement with the aid of a bourgeois lie." Such a concrete reply to concrete questions would be theoretically more correct, much more useful to the proletariat and more unbearable to the opportunists, than the demand for disarmament and the repudiation of "all defence of the fatherland"! And we might add: "The bourgeoisie of all the imperialist Great Powers—England, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Japan, the United States—has become so reactionary and so imbued with the striving for world domination, that any war conducted by the bourgeoisie of those countries can be nothing but reactionary. The proletariat must not only oppose all such wars, but it must also wish for the defeat of its 'own' government in such wars; and it must utilize it for revolutionary insurrection, if an insurrection to prevent the war proves unsuccessful."

On the question of a militia, we should have said: We are not in favour of a bourgeois militia; we are in favour only of a proletarian militia. Therefore, "not a penny, not a man," not only for a standing army, but even for a bourgeois militia, even in countries like the United States, Switzerland, Norway, etc.; the more so that in the freest republican countries (*e.g.*, Switzerland), we see that the militia is being more and more Prussianized, particularly in 1907 and 1911, and prostituted by being mobilized against strikers. We can demand election of officers by the people, abolition of military law, equal rights for foreign and native born workers (a point particularly important for those imperialist states which, like Switzerland,

more and more blatantly exploit increasing numbers of foreign workers while refusing to grant them rights); further, the right of every hundred, say, of the inhabitants of the given country, to form voluntary associations, with free election of instructors, who are to be paid by the state, etc. Only under such conditions could the proletariat acquire military training really for *itself* and not for its slaveowners; and the need for such training is dictated by the interests of the proletariat. The Russian revolution showed that every success of the revolutionary movement, even a partial success like the seizure of a certain city, a certain factory village, a certain section of the army—inevitably *compels* the victorious proletariat to carry out just such a program.

Finally, it goes without saying that opportunism cannot be fought merely by means of programs; it can be fought only by constant vigilance to see that they are really carried out. The greatest, the fatal error the bankrupt Second International committed was that its words did not correspond to its deeds, that it acquired the habit of unscrupulous revolutionary phrase-mongering (note the present attitude of Kautsky and Co. towards the Basle Manifesto). Disarmament as a social idea, *i.e.*, an idea that springs from a certain social environment and which can affect a certain social environment—and is not merely a cranky notion of an individual—has evidently sprung from the exceptionally "tranquil" conditions of life prevailing in certain small states which have for a rather long time stood on the side, and hope to stay on the side, of the bloody world highway of war. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient, for instance, to ponder over the arguments advanced by the Norwegian advocates of disarmament. "We are a small country," they say. "We have a small army, we can do nothing against the Great Powers [and are, therefore, also powerless to resist being forcibly drawn into an imperialist *alliance* with one or the other group of Great Powers].... We want to be left in peace in our remote corner and continue to conduct our parochial politics, to demand disarmament, compulsory courts of arbitration, permanent neutrality, etc." ("permanent" after the Belgian fashion, no doubt).

The petty striving of petty states to stand aside, the petty-bourgeois desire to keep as far away as possible from the great battles of world history, to take advantage of one's relatively monopolistic position in order to remain in hidebound passivity—this is the *objective* social environment which may ensure the disarmament idea a certain degree of success and a certain degree of popularity in some of the small states. Of course, this striving is reactionary and entirely based on illusions; for in one way or another, imperialism draws the small states into the vortex of world economy and world politics.

In Switzerland, for example, the imperialist environment objectively prescribes *two* lines to the labour movement. The opportunists, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, are trying to convert Switzerland into a republican-democratic monopolistic federation for obtaining profits from imperialist

bourgeois tourists and to make this "tranquil" monopolistic position as profitable and as tranquil as possible.

The genuine Social-Democrats of Switzerland are striving to take advantage of the comparative freedom of Switzerland and its "international" situation (proximity to the most highly cultured countries), the fact that Switzerland, thank God, has not "its own independent" language, but three world languages, to widen, consolidate and strengthen the *revolutionary* alliance of the revolutionary elements of the proletariat of the whole of Europe. Switzerland, thank God, has not a "special" language, but three world languages, precisely those that are spoken by the adjacent belligerent countries.

If the twenty thousand members of the Swiss Party were to pay a weekly levy of two centimes as a sort of "extra war tax," we would have about twenty thousand francs per annum, a sum more than sufficient to enable us periodically to publish in three languages and to distribute among the workers and soldiers of the belligerent countries—in spite of the ban of the General Staffs—all the material containing the truth about the incipient revolt of the workers, about their fraternizing in the trenches, about their hope to use their arms in a revolutionary manner against the imperialist bourgeoisie of their "own" countries, etc.

All this is not new. This is exactly what is being done by the best papers, like *La Sentinelle, Volksrecht* and the *Berner Tagwacht*;* unfortunately it is not being done on a sufficiently large scale. Only by such activity can the splendid decision of the Aarau Party Congress** become something more than merely a splendid decision.

The question that interests us now is: Does the demand for disarmament correspond to the revolutionary trend among the Swiss Social-Democrats? Obviously not. Objectively, "disarmament" is an extremely national, a specifically national program of small states; it is certainly not the international program of international revolutionary Social-Democracy.

Written in the autumn of 1916
First published in German in Nos 9 and 10
of the magazine *Jugendinternationale,*
September and October 1917

* *La Sentinelle*—the organ of the adherents of the Zimmerwald Left in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party; *Volksrecht*—a daily newspaper published under the joint auspices of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party and the Social-Democratic organization of Zurich; *Berner Tagwacht*— the official organ of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party.—*Ed.*

** Aarau Party Congress—the Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party held on November 20-21, 1915.—*Ed.*

LETTERS FROM AFAR

FIRST LETTER

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE FIRST REVOLUTION

The first revolution to be engendered by the imperialist World War has broken out. This first revolution will assuredly not be the last.

To judge by the scanty information at the writer's disposal here in Switzerland, the first stage of this first revolution, namely, of the *Russian* revolution of March 1, 1917, has ended.

This first stage of our revolution will assuredly not be the last.

How could such a "miracle" have happened, that in not more than eight days—the period mentioned by Mr. Milyukov in his boastful telegram to Russia's representatives abroad—there should have collapsed a monarchy that had maintained itself for centuries, and that in spite of everything managed to maintain itself throughout the tremendous, nation-wide class conflicts of the three years 1905-07?

Miracles in nature and history do not happen. But every abrupt turn in history, and this applies to every revolution, presents such wealth of content, unfolds such unexpected and specific combinations of the forms of struggle and the alignment of forces of the contestants, that to the lay mind there is much that must appear miraculous.

For the tsarist monarchy to have collapsed in a few days required the combination of a number of factors of historic importance. We shall mention the chief of them.

Without the tremendous class battles and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years 1905-07, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its *initial* stage was completed in a few days. The first revolution (1905) deeply ploughed the soil and uprooted age-old prejudices; it awakened millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants to political life and political struggle; it revealed *all* classes (and all the principal parties) of Russian society to each other—and to the world—in their true character and in the true alignment of their interests, their forces, their modes of

action, and their immediate and ultimate aims. This first revolution. and the succeeding period of counter-revolution (1907-14), *laid bare the* very soul of the tsarist monarchy, brought it to the "utmost limit," exposed the whole rottenness and infamy, the cynicism and dissoluteness of the tsar's gang, headed by that monster, Rasputin; it exposed the bestiality of the Romanov family, those pogrom-mongers, who have drenched Russia in the blood of Jews, workers and revolutionaries—those *landlords,* "first among peers," *who own millions* of acres of land and are ready to stoop to any brutality, to any crimes—who are ready to ruin and strangle any number f citizens in order to preserve the "sacred right of property" for themselves ' *their class.*

Without the Revolution of 1905-07 and the counter-revolution of 1907-14, that precise "self-determination" of all classes of the Russian people and of the nations inhabiting Russia, that determination of the relation of these classes to each other and to the tsarist monarchy, which manifested itself during the eight days of the February-March Revolution of 1917 would have been impossible. This eight-day revolution was "performed," if we may express ourselves metaphorically, as though after a dozen major and minor rehearsals; the "actors" knew each other, their parts, their places, and their setting in every detail, through and through, down to every more or less significant shade of political trend and mode of action.

But, while the first great Revolution of 1905, which Messieurs the Guchkovs and Milyukovs and their hangers-on have branded as a "great mutiny," led, after the lapse of a dozen years, to the "brilliant," the "glorious revolution" of 1917—which the Guchkovs and Milyukovs proclaim to be "glorious" because it has put them in power (*for the time being*)—it still required a great, mighty and all-powerful "producer" who would be capable, on the one hand, of vastly accelerating the course of world history and, on the other, of engendering world-wide crises of unparalleled intensity—economic, political, national and international. Apart from an extraordinary acceleration of world history, it was also required that history should make particularly abrupt turns, in order that at one of these turns the filthy and bloodstained cart of the Romanov monarchy should be *abruptly* overturned.

This all-powerful "producer," this mighty accelerator was the imperialist World War.

It is now indisputable that it is a world war, for the United States and China are today already half-drawn into it, and will be fully drawn into it to-morrow.

It is now indisputable that it is an imperialist war on *both* sides. Only the capitalists and their hangers-on, the social-patriots and social-chauvinists, can deny or gloss over this fact. *Both* the German and the Anglo-French bourgeoisie are waging the war for the plunder of foreign countries and the strangling of small nations, for financial supremacy over the world and

the division and redivision of colonies, and in order to save the tottering capitalist regime by fooling and sowing dissension among the workers of the various countries.

It was objectively inevitable that the imperialist war should have immensely accelerated and extremely intensified the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie; it is objectively inevitable that it shall be transformed into a civil war between hostile classes.

This *transformation was started* by the February-March Revolution of 1917, the first stage of which was first of all marked by a joint blow at tsarism struck by two forces: on the one hand, by the whole of bourgeois and landlord Russia, with all its unwitting hangers-on and all its conscious leaders, the British and French ambassadors and capitalists, and, on the other, *by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.*

These three political camps, these three fundamental political forces—(1) the tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landlords, of the old bureaucracy and the military caste; (2) the Octobrist and Cadet Russia of the bourgeoisie and landlords, behind which the petty bourgeoisie trailed; (3) the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which is seeking to make the whole proletariat and all the poor masses of the population its allies—these three *fundamental* political forces became fully and clearly revealed even in the eight days of the "first stage" and even to an observer so remote from the scene of events and obliged to content himself with the meagre dispatches of foreign newspapers as the present writer.

But, before speaking of this in greater detail, I must return to that part of my letter which is devoted to a factor of prime importance, namely, the imperialist World War.

The belligerent powers, the belligerent groups of capitalists, the "bosses" of the capitalist system, the slaveowners of the capitalist slave system, are shackled to each other by the war with *chains of iron. One bloody clot*—that is the social and political life of the present moment in history.

The Socialists who deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie upon the outbreak of the war—all the Davids and Scheidemanns in Germany and the Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Gvozdevs and Co. in Russia—clamoured loud and long against the "illusions" of the revolutionaries, against the "illusions" of the Basle Manifesto, against the "farcical dream" of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war. They went through the whole gamut of praises to the strength, tenacity and adaptability allegedly revealed by capitalism—*they*, who had aided the capitalists to "adapt," tame, fool and disunite the working classes of the various countries!

But "he who laughs last laughs best." The bourgeoisie have been unable to delay for long the revolutionary crisis engendered by the war. The crisis is growing with irresistible force in all countries, beginning with Germany, which, according to an observer who recently visited that country, is suffering "brilliantly organized starvation," and ending with England and France,

where *starvation is also* looming, but where organization is far less "brilliant."

It was only natural that the revolutionary crisis should have broken out *first of all* in tsarist Russia, where disorganization was most monstrous and the proletariat most revolutionary (not by virtue of any specific qualities, but because of the living traditions of 1905). Here the crisis was hastened by the series of most severe defeats suffered by Russia and her allies. These defeats entirely disjointed the old machinery of government and the old order and roused against them the anger of *all* classes of the population; they incensed the army, wiped out on a vast scale its old diehard-noble and rotten-bureaucratic commanding staff, and replaced it by a young, fresh commanding staff consisting principally of bourgeois, plebeians, petty bourgeois.

But while the defeats in the war were a negative factor hastening the outbreak of the crisis, the *connection* of Anglo-French finance capital, of Anglo-French imperialism, with the Octobrist and Constitutional-Democratic capital of Russia was a factor that speeded the crisis.

This highly important aspect of the situation is, for obvious reasons, not mentioned by the Anglo-French press, but is maliciously emphasized by the German. We Marxists must face the truth soberly, and not allow ourselves to be confused either by the official lies, the sugary diplomatic and Ministerial lies of the first group of imperialist belligerents, or by the sniggering and smirking of its financial and military rivals of the other belligerent group. The whole course of events in the February-March Revolution clearly shows that the British and French embassies, with their agents and "connections," who had for a long time been making the most desperate efforts to prevent "separate" agreements and a separate peace between Nicholas II (who, let us hope and endeavour, will be the last) and Wilhelm II, directly strove to *dethrone* Nicholas Romanov.

Let us harbour no illusions.

That the revolution succeeded so quickly and—seemingly, at the first superficial glance—so "radically" is due to the fact that, as a result of an extremely unique historical situation, *absolutely dissimilar* movements, *absolutely heterogeneous* class interests, *absolutely contrary* political and social tendencies have *merged*, and merged in a strikingly "harmonious" manner. There was the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists, who impelled Milyukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power *for the purpose of continuing the imperialist war*, for the purpose of conducting the war still more ferociously and obstinately, for the purpose *of slaughtering fresh millions* of Russian workers and peasants in order that the Guchkovs might obtain Constantinople, the French capitalists Syria, the British capitalists Mesopotamia, and so on. This on the one hand. On the other, there was a profound proletarian and mass popular movement of a revolutionary character (a movement of the entire poor population of town and country) for *bread*, for *peace*, for *real freedom*.

The revolutionary workers and soldiers have destroyed the infamous tsarist *monarchy* root and branch, neither elated nor dismayed by the fact that at certain brief and exceptional historical conjunctures *they were aided* by the efforts of Buchanan, Guchkov, Milyukov and Co., whose desire was simply to replace one monarch *by another*.

This was the true state of affairs. And this alone must be the view of a politician who does not fear the truth, who soberly weighs the balance of social forces in the revolution, who appraises every "given moment" not only from the point of view of the present, current peculiarities, but also from the point of view of the deeper-lying springs, the deeper interrelation of the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, both in Russia and throughout the world.

The workers and soldiers of Petrograd, like the workers and soldiers of the whole of Russia, self-sacrificingly fought the tsarist monarchy—for freedom, land for the peasants, and *peace* as against the imperialist slaughter. Anglo-French imperialist capital, in order to continue and intensify that slaughter, hatched court intrigues, conspired, incited and encouraged the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, and prepared to install *a new and ready-made government*, which in fact *did seize power* after the proletarian struggle had struck the first blows at tsarism.

This government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons.

They are representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of capitalist landlords and bourgeoisie, the class that for a long time *has been ruling* our country economically, and that during the Revolution of 1905-07, during the counter-revolutionary period of 1907-14, and finally—and with especial rapidity—during the war period of 1914-17, organized itself politically with extreme rapidity, taking into its hands the control of the local government bodies, public education, conventions of every type, the Duma, the War Industry Committees, etc. This new class was already "nearly" *in* power by 1917, and therefore the first blows dealt at tsarism were sufficient to bring the latter to the ground and clear the way for the bourgeoisie. The imperialist war, which required an incredible exertion of effort, so accelerated the course of development of backward Russia that we have "at a single stroke" (or rather as it *seemed at a single stroke*) *caught up with* Italy, England, and almost with France; we have obtained a "coalition," a "national" (*i.e.*, adapted for carrying on the imperialist slaughter and for deceiving the people), a "parliamentary" government.

Side by side with this government—which as regards the *present* war is but the agent of the billion-dollar "firm," "England and France"—there has arisen a new, unofficial, undeveloped and as yet comparatively weak *workers' government*, expressing the interests of the proletariat and of the poor section of the urban and rural population as a whole. This is the *Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies* in Petrograd.

Such is the *real* political situation, which we must first endeavour to

define with the greatest possible objective precision, in order that Marxist tactics may be based upon the only solid foundation upon which they can be based—the foundation of *facts.*

The tsarist monarchy has been smashed, but not finally destroyed.

The Octobrist Cadet bourgeois government, which desires to fight the imperialist war "to a finish," is in reality the agent of the financial firm "England and France." It is *obliged to promise* the people the *maximum* of liberties and sops compatible with the maintenance of its power over the people and the possibility of continuing the imperialist slaughter.

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is the embryo of a workers' government, the representative of the interests of the *poor* masses of the population as a whole, *i.e.*, of nine-tenths of the population, and is striving for *peace, bread* and *freedom.*

The conflict of these three forces determines the situation as it exists at present, which is *transitional* from the first stage of the revolution to the second.

In order to conduct a real struggle against the tsarist monarchy, and in order that freedom may be guaranteed in fact, and not merely in words, not merely in the promises of glib liberalism, it is necessary, *not* that the workers should support the new government, but that this government should "support" the workers! For the only *guarantee* of liberty and of the complete destruction of tsarism lies in *arming the proletariat,* in strengthening, extending and developing the role, significance, and power of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

All the rest is mere phrasemongering and lies, self-deception on the part of the politicians of the liberal and radical camp.

Help, or at least do not hinder, the arming of the workers, and liberty in Russia will be invincible, the monarchy irrestorable, the republic secure.

Otherwise the people will be fooled. Promises are cheap, promises cost nothing. It was with promises that all bourgeois politicians in *all* bourgeois revolutions "fed" the people and fooled the workers.

Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution and *therefore* the workers must support the bourgeoisie, declare the worthless politicians in the camp of the Liquidators.

Our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, we Marxists declare; and *therefore* the workers must open the eyes of the people to the deception practised by the bourgeois politicians; they must teach them not to trust in words, but to depend entirely on their *own* strength, on their *own* organization, on their *own* unity, and on their *own* weapons.

The government of the Octobrists and Cadets, of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, *cannot* give *peace, bread* and *freedom* even if it sincerely desired to.

It cannot give peace because it is a war government, a government for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter, a government of *conquest,* which so far has not uttered a single word in renunciation of the tsarist

policy of seizing Armenia, Galicia, Turkey, of annexing Constantinople, of reconquering Poland, Courland, Livonia, etc. This government is bound hand and foot by Anglo-French imperialist capital. Russian capital is merely a branch of the world-wide "firm" which manipulates *hundreds of billions* of rubles and is called "England and France."

It cannot give bread because it is a bourgeois government. *At best*, it can give the people "brilliantly organized starvation," as Germany did. But the people will not tolerate starvation. The people will learn, and probably very soon, that bread exists and can be obtained, but only by methods *that do not respect the sanctity of capital and landownership.*

It cannot give freedom because it is a government of landlords and capitalists, and *fears* the people.

We shall deal in another article with the tactical problems of our immediate attitude towards this government. We shall there show wherein lies the peculiarity of the present situation, which is a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second, and why the slogan, the "order of the day," at *this* moment must be: *Workers, you have displayed marvels of proletarian heroism of the people in the civil war against tsardom. You must display marvels of organization, organization of the proletariat and of the whole people, in order to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution.*

Confining ourselves *for the present* to an analysis of the class struggle and the alignment of class forces at this stage of the revolution, we must ask: who are the *allies* of the proletariat in *this* revolution?

It has *two* allies: first, the broad masses of the semi-proletarian and partly also of the petty-peasant population of Russia, who number scores of millions and constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. For this mass peace, bread, freedom and land are *essential*. It is inevitable that this mass will to a certain extent be under the influence of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the petty bourgeoisie, to which it is most akin in its condition of life, vacillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel lessons of war, which will be *the more* cruel the more vigorously the war is prosecuted by Guchkov, Lvov, Milyukov and Co., will inevitably urge this mass towards the proletariat, compel it to follow the proletariat. We must now take advantage of the freedom given by the new regime and of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to strive first of all and above all to *enlighten* and *organize* this mass. Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Agricultural Workers—that is one of our most urgent tasks. In this connection our endeavour will be not only that the agricultural workers should establish their own separate Soviets, but that the poor and propertyless peasants should organize *separately* from the well-to-do peasants. The special tasks and special forms of organization urgently needed at the present time will be dealt with in the next letter.

The second ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of *all* the belligerent countries and of all countries in general. At present this ally

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is to a large degree repressed by the war; and the social-chauvinists in Europe, who, like Plekhanov, Gvozdev and Potresov in Russia, have deserted to the bourgeoisie, speak all too frequently in its name. But the liberation of the proletariat from their influence has progressed with every month of the imperialist war, and it is *inevitable* that the Russian revolution will immensely accelerate this process.

With these two allies, the proletariat of Russia, *utilizing the peculiarities* of the present state of transition, can and will proceed, first, to achieve a democratic republic and the complete victory of the peasantry over the landlords, and then to *Socialism,* which alone can give the war-weary people *peace, bread* and *freedom.*

Pravda Nos 14 and 15,
April 3 and 4 [March 21 and 22], 1917.

ERRATA

Page	*Line from top*	*Reads*	*Should read*
17	42	form	from
338	4	"anitithesis"	"antithesis"
357	14	at is it	as it is
392	36	the resolution of	the resolution to
479	6	messes	masses
659	31	calls is	calls it